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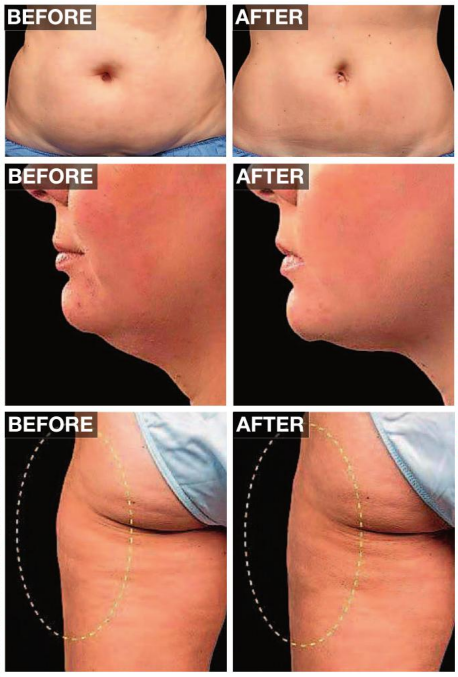

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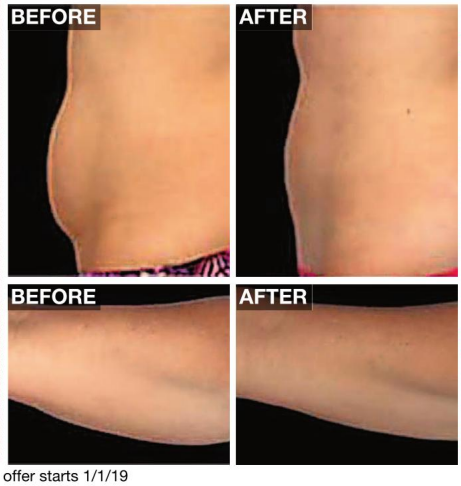

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Distributed in Notting Hill and surrounding areas

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COVER IMAGE:
Cecil Beaton, Queen Elizabeth II, Coronation Day, 1953, Gelatin silver print © Victoria and Albert Museum

MAKE UP BY LISA FRANKLIN; LISAFRANKLIN.LONDON; PHOTO BY TOM DUNKLEY

JANUARY 2019

Letter from the EDITOR

So, the new year is upon us already – crazy, isn't it?! I don't particularly buy into new years resolutions but I do like to start the year with some positivity and with a goal to achieve all that I can. Obviously, as a magazine editor, it's perhaps a bit of a no-brainer, but I find that reading feature interviews with inspirational people is a great way to start the year off the right way.

I've followed Pandora Sykes since the beginning of my journalism career. In fact, since before it, as I've followed her ever since I started interning and I can hand on heart say that she was a part of what inspired me to chase my dream – so thank you Pandora! So imagine my joy when we managed to pin her down for an interview for the first magazine of the year. 2018 was a big year for her and it's great to hear that 2019 looks to be just as exciting. Turn to page 14 to inspire the entrepreneur and go-getter inside of you. It's the perfect way to set January off right.

And to continue the aspirational theme, check out our feature on an incredible aspirational design project and property this month in Hyde Park Gardens. If, like me, you love to give your home a little makeover at the beginning of a new year, then this Space of the Month is sure to offer all the inspiration you could ever want. After the mayhem and hectic nature of the festive season, January is the perfect month to cast a fresh eye over every room in your home. It can help you to feel refreshed and ready for the year ahead. Turn to page 42 to see inside this stunning property and garner some inspiration for your own ideas.

I always find that there is something quite escapist about January too, although I know that I am one of the few. Perhaps it's because it's my birthday month, but I don't buy into the whole doom and gloom January thing. I think it's a month where you can still hunker on down in front of the fire and escape the outside world a bit. And for those of you out there who feel the same, we've got a bit of a treat in store for you this month with something of a travel special. Dream away your January and get some inspiration for your year to come from some of our insights into the Maldives, Athens or a variety of staycations in England. Just because Christmas is over, doesn't mean you have to stop dreaming and treating yourselves!

Happy New Year everyone - enjoy the issue.

Bethan

Bethan Andrews, Editor
Bethan.Andrews@archant.co.uk

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CULTURE

{ THE FINEST IN CULTURAL EVENTS AND NEW LAUNCHES }

CREDIT: CYRIL MANN, STILL LIFE WITH BOTTLES, OIL ON BOARD, 41.6 X 33.3CM, C.1955, COPYRIGHT PIANO NOBILE

POP ART

Piano Nobile will be presenting an exhibition of Cyril Mann's pieces entitled *The Solid Shadow Paintings,* exhibited together for the first time since their creation in the 1950s. Mann's solid shadow paintings use bold colours and crisp outlines to give ordinary objects extraordinary force and weight – a style and subject matter embraced a decade later by Pop Art. The exhibition will also include works from the artist's estate – many on display for the first time.

129 Portland Road, W11 4LW; piano-nobile.com

Big picture

St James's is now home to a brand new gallery called 3812, which is determined to bring the world of Chinese contemporary art to the forefront of the London art market. Here founder Calvin Hui tells us all about the inspiration for the gallery what to expect from them in 2019.

ABOVE: Artist Qu Leilei is one of the first to exhibit his work at the new gallery

BELOW: Calvin Hui is the co-founder and co-director of the new gallery

What made you decide to open the new gallery?
We are thrilled to have launched 3812 in London, our first gallery outside Hong Kong. There are few London galleries specialising in contemporary Chinese art, and particularly those embodying both new concepts and traditional Eastern aesthetics such as ink art, which is our speciality. Now seemed like the optimum time to bring our expertise and unique exhibitions to London, sharing the history and culture of China's past with a renewed identity of its future.

What is special about this area of St James's for art?
St James's is renowned for its collection of world-class galleries and art dealers. The district represents the highest standard in luxury and exclusivity. It's no surprise that the area is such a vibrant hub for art and culture. Many of our neighbours exhibit traditional art such as antiques and old master paintings, attracting established collectors who admire skill, aesthetics and have a deep understanding of history and culture. There are also contemporary art leaders such as White Cube and the Institute of Contemporary Art in the area. 3812 Gallery enjoys a unique standing in the area, our featured artists and their works will appeal to collectors who appreciate artworks bridging the gap between tradition and modernity.

You already have a fantastic reputation in Hong Kong, are you hoping to bring this to London?
Absolutely! We opened 3812 Gallery in Hong Kong in 2011 and the gallery has grown to be a leading name in Chinese contemporary art, and the foremost gallery specialising in ink art. By opening 3812 Gallery in London, we are bringing our leading expertise and passion for introducing Chinese art in a broader perspective based on my deep understanding of Chinese culture.

Do you think Chinese contemporary art is less well known on the London art scene?
Yes and no. There is an enormous market for Chinese art in Asia, which may not have been promoted or seen in London. 3812 introduces Chinese artists who emphasize the importance of both aesthetic quality, cultural understanding and new ideas on their artistic creations. Our mission is to cultivate the London market by sharing our expertise in recommending artworks with cultural and aesthetic values which could be essential for sustainable growth in the fast-changing art market. We also have a solid base of existing collectors here, plus our co-founder Mark Peaker is a Londoner!

This month, your exhibition will be *Echoes*, can you tell us a little bit about this?
Echoes is a solo exhibition by renowned contemporary ink artist Qu Leilei. A founding member of the Stars group – avant-garde artists who campaigned for artistic freedom in communist China in the late 1970s and early 1980s, often hailed as the first contemporary art movement in China, Qu has lived and worked in the UK since 1985. The exhibition will feature works in his trademark style and new series such as Coal Miner; finely executed and hyper-realistic paintings, demonstrating his mastery skills in traditional ink brushes while bringing principle of light applied in western art to Chinese ink painting.

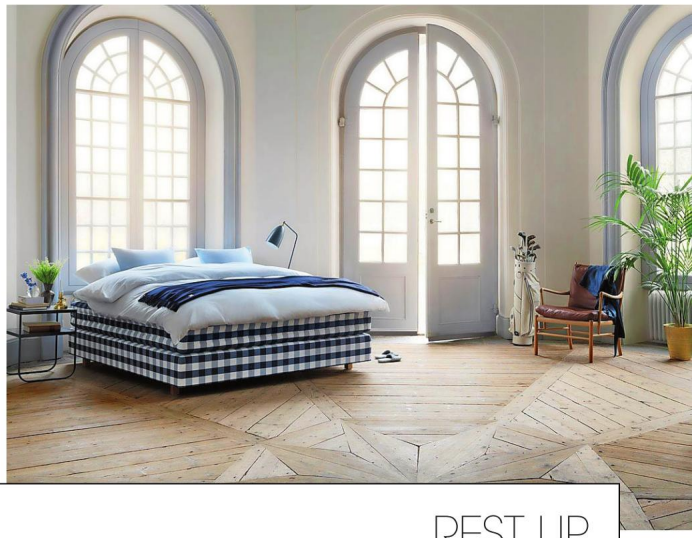
Do you have any other highlights to look forward to?
Starting from 2019, I will introduce some excellent ink artists from Asia to London through my new INK NOW platform, and very much look forward to building artistic project collaborations with academic institutions, publishers and commercial sectors as well.

What are you looking forward to achieving in your first year?
I'm looking forward to presenting truly unique art forms that reflect the elegance and beauty of Chinese art. 3812 London Gallery believes that sharing cultural identity is essential in the understanding and appreciation of Chinese art, so we'd like to foster cultural understanding and expand London's appreciation of Asian art through our thoughtfully curated art programs.

CITY OF CULTURE

The London Art Fair is returning this month from 16–20 January to showcase the most exceptional modern and contemporary art of our time. The fair invites visitors to see work by artists like Andy Warhol and Salvador Dali, as well as giving them the opportunity to buy pieces as well. Expect talks, tours, screenings and curated spaces at this year's event, including *Photo50,* an annual exhibition of contemporary photography; *Art Projects,* which features large-scale installations, solo shows and group displays and – within *Art Projects – Dialogues*, a guest-curated section of *Art Projects* intended to encourage and foster relationships between home and abroad.

Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, N1 0QH; londonartfair.co.uk



REST UP

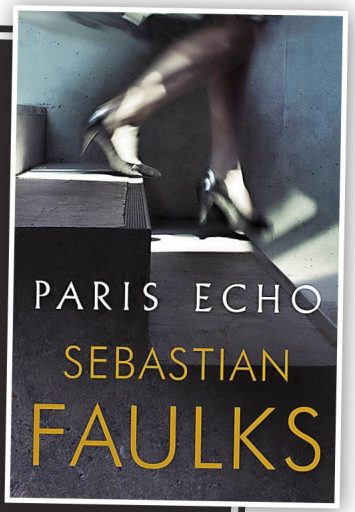
Luxury Swedish bed maker Hästens have recently opened a new showroom in Notting Hill. The new launch for the much-loved premium brand coincides with them launching three new colour ways to join their 'Satin Pure' Linen collection as well as four new beds. Launched off the back of increased demand in the UK, you can now find their premium products in Notting Hill Gate.

140-142 Notting Hill Gate, W11 3QG; hastens.com/en

VIVE LA FRANCE

Notting Hill-based author Sebastian Faulks has recently released his latest novel *Paris Echo.* The story follows American postdoctoral researcher Hannah and runaway Moroccan teenager Tariq dealing with a very different Paris. It's an urgent and deeply moving novel, dealing with questions of empire, grievance and identity. With great originality and a dark humour, *Paris Echo* asks how much we really need to know if we are to live a valuable life.

Paris Echo by Sebastian Faulks (Hutchinson; £20.00) is out now



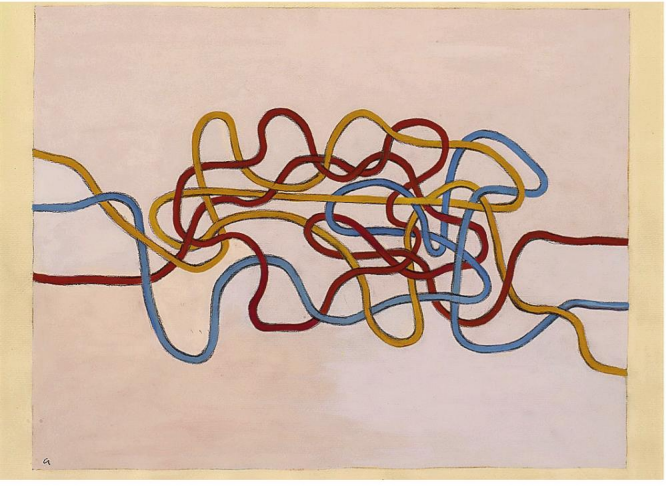
KING OF THE ROAD

The story of the lion that lived on King's Road in Chelsea is one that captured many people's imaginations at the time. In 1969, two young Australians, John Rendall and Anthony Burke, bought a three-month old lion cub from Harrods, naming him Christian and for a year he lived with them at their furniture shop at the end of King's Road, Chelsea, where renowned photographer Derek Cattani began photographing him. Now Rendall has written a book documenting the period, along with Cattani's photographs to bring it to a new generation and inspire conservation of these mighty animals.

Christian The Lion: The Illustrated Legacy by John Rendall and Derek Cattani (hardback: £25) is out now

BY FAY WATSON; CREDITS: QU LEILEI AND CALVIN HUI IMAGES COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND 3812 GALLERY; INGRID BERGMAN WITH HAT BY ANDY WARHOL (1983), COURTESY OF GORMLEY'S FINE ART; CHRISTIAN ATTRACTS YOUNG ADMIRERS AS HE HEADS OUT IN THE BENTLEY, PHOTO BY DEREK CATTANI; HASTENS PHOTO BY PHILIP KARLBERG;

CULTURE



STITCHED UP

It's your last chance to catch the Tate's exhibition of Anni Albers' incredible work in the ancient art of hand-weaving this month. Exploring her pivotal contribution to modern art and design, this is the first major exhibition of her work in the UK. Visitors can discover her work via more than 350 objects from exquisite small-scale 'pictorial weavings' to large wall-hangings and the textiles she designed for mass production, as well as her later prints and drawings.

The Eyal Ofer Galleries, Bankside, SE1 9TG; tate.org.uk

MOUNTAINS BETWEEN US

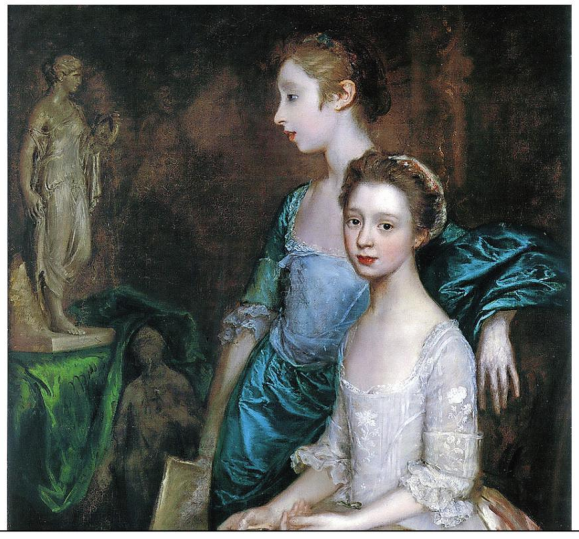
Celebrated Swiss painter Conrad Jon Godly will be bringing his collection of 3D paintings of the Swiss Alps to Mayfair's prestigious JD Malat Gallery this month. Running from 24 January until 28 February, this will be Godly's first UK solo show to date. It will feature 15 pieces, which aim to straddle both abstract and hyperreal in the artist's unique style of oils mixed with turpentine and his trademark wide, sculptural brushstrokes. After nearly two decades as a successful fashion photographer, Godly decided to make a career change in 2005, returning to his roots as a painter. Inspired by the mountains of Chur, his work takes on a meditative quality thanks to how it depicts nature in all of its majesty. The show, entitled *To See is Not to Speak,* does not look like one to miss this New Year.

30 Davies St, Mayfair, W1K 4NB; jdmalat.com

BRICK WORK

Brick Mini Format by William Hall and Dan Cruickshank is out this month on 21 January to celebrate the art of brick building. The pictorial essay takes an intriguing look at the world's oldest manmade building material, collating remarkable and beautiful brick buildings from around the world. As well as this, it also showcases fantastic early works of architecture, such as the strange remains of the Ziggurat of Ur (dating from 2100 BC) as well as some of London's most celebrated buildings.

Brick Mini Format by William Hall, essay by Dan Cruickshank is published by Phaidon on 21 January



OLD MASTERS

You don't have long left to visit the National Portrait Gallery's much-acclaimed exhibition *Gainsborough's Family Album*. On display in the Wolfson Gallery, the exhibition follows Thomas Gainsborough's extensive work documenting himself and his family members. As one of the first British artists to regularly do this, the exhibition explores how this practice helped the eighteenth century artist rise to fame.

St Martin's Place, WC2H 0HE; npg.org.uk

A REAL CLASSIC

Acclaimed violinist Jennifer Pike is exploring her Polish heritage in her new album released this month. Entitled *The Polish Violin*, the album will be available from on 4 January and will feature Pike alongside pianist Petr Limonov. Pike hopes to album is to build bridges through music following political upheaval and even led her to organise recent concert programmes in this vein, including her Polish Music Day concert at Wigmore Hall in 2017.

The Polish Violin by Jennifer Pike is out 4 January (Chandos: £9.99); chandos.net

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CRYSTAL CLEAR

This month Cirque du Soleil's famous show *TOTEM* is returning to the Royal Albert Hall. Approaching its 10th successful year of touring since its 2010 debut, *TOTEM* is a fascinating glimpse into the journey of mankind, tracing the fascinating journey of the human species from its original amphibian state to its ultimate desire to fly. Running from 12 January until 9 February at the Royal Albert Hall, the show looks certain to be a visual spectacle not to miss.

Kensington Gore, Kensington, SW7 2AP; royalalberthall.com

PANDORA'S BOX

Journalist Pandora Sykes tells us all about podcasts, social media and her love of west London

Words: FAY WATSON

You'd be forgiven for being more familiar with journalist Pandora Sykes' voice than her face. Indeed, as one half of the fantastically popular podcast, *The High Low*, it's a voice that around 180,000 people listen to weekly.

The podcast focuses around a current affairs discussion between Sykes and one of her closest friends, author and journalist Dolly Alderton, and it has been something of a runaway success since it began 18 months ago. It all started out with an initial podcast called *Pandolly*, which the pair started when Sykes was still working as an editor at *The Sunday Times Style.* When she left the magazine, the pair had to leave the title with it and decided to start from scratch with *The High Low.*

'Right from the start the M.O. was that it would be current affairs and pop culture and culture in general,' Sykes explains. 'We called it *The High Low* in deference to Tina Brown, the ex-*Vanity Fair, Tatler* and *New Yorker* editor who coined the term high/low journalism in the 80s when she was at *Vanity Fair* with the idea that life is best enjoyed with a mix of the low brow and the high brow.'

Covering topics as broad as Collins Dictionary Word of the Year to frank discussions about anxiety, as well as booking high profile guests including Lindsey Hilsum, it's been a big success. It thrives on being relatable, allowing listeners to be involved in a rigorous and intellectual conversation, without any shame that your views on it might not yet be concrete.

LEFT HAND PAGE PHOTO BY EVA K SALVI, @EVAKSALVI, COURTESY PANDORA SYKES; TOP RIGHT PHOTO BY FRANCES DAVISON, @TILFRANCES, COURTESY PANDORA SYKES; BOTTOM LEFT PHOTO BY CARLOSANCHEZPEREYRA / GETTY IMAGES

'This isn't some kind of off-the-cuff chat, we really want it to be as journalistically rigorous as possible,' Sykes explains, telling me that her and Alderton shoot ideas back and forth all week. And they've grown the team to now consist of a fact-checker, producer and someone to monitor the inbox, as well as both Sykes and Alderton having agents. But what I've always found it does so well is balance this with the intimacy of friends chatting. 'It's the most me of anything I've done work wise,' she smiles, adding, 'and our chemistry is that of two very close friends so the product is literally just us talking together in a room, which is very freeing.'

ABOVE: Pandora Sykes has developed an impressive career as a style writer, as well many other talents

BELOW: Sykes loves visting Notting Hill's cafés, like the popular Golborne Deli

It's useful then that her and Alderton get along so well, having been friends for many years, which Sykes tells me has been essential during a busy 2018. 'It's been a very intense year for both of us,' she admits. 'I had a baby and *The High Low* started very soon after I had her, I didn't have much of a maternity leave and Dolly wrote a book [*Everything I Know About Love*], which has just won a National Book Award. At times it's been quite hard to keep up with everything and the fact that we're such close friends is the only way we've managed to not only keep it going, but grow it so much in the last six months and enjoy doing it.'

Aside from *The High Low*, Sykes has developed a career as a highly sought-after writer over the past decade. She is a contributing editor for *Elle* and *Manrepeller* and regularly writes for everyone from *The Sunday Times* and *Vogue* to *Marie Claire* and *Red.* 'Writing in all sorts of guises is my favourite thing to do,' she explains when I ask if it was something she'd always wanted ▸

to do. 'I always wanted to be a writer, it's by far my favourite thing. It's not the thing I do the most of because writing doesn't pay the bills in the same way that other stuff I do does, but it makes me feel like me.'

I'm in awe of her passion and hardworking nature when we speak so it doesn't surprise me to find out she is always on the cusp of expanding into new platforms, from starting a blog in the naissance of Wordpress to getting on the Instagram hype when it first started. The latter has seen her become an 'accidental influencer', as she ascribed herself in a piece for *Manrepeller*.

But while the platform has allowed her to develop partnerships with brands like Uterqüe and Pampers, she explains how she often finds herself withdrawing from it, deleting it from her phone almost daily. 'I kind of resent the focus on Instagram sometimes, the whole sort of influencer word I'm not hugely comfortable with because my job has always been in my eyes being a journalist, but it has given me opportunities,' she explains. 'I feel quite disengaged from it now because I do enjoy Instagram, I enjoy posting stuff, it's great to get stuff out there, I like to see what other people are up to, I get inspiration from it, but I also delete it all the time.' She adds that she prefers to be 'deliberately detached' from it.

It's something that she admits has become more acute since giving birth to her daughter last year, noting that maximising how she spends her time is so much more important to her now. 'If you are constantly sharing stuff to social media, that takes time,' she adds. 'And it's time that I am so careful with now because I have a nanny now for when I work so time really is money for me,' she laughs.

Sykes lives with her husband and little girl in Kensal Green, having moved there last December from their flat in Notting Hill. 'I feel like we've been here forever,' she beams. 'I do love my beloved Notting Hill, but Kensal Green does feel like home now.' She explains that one of the things she likes best about the area is how much of a community it feels. 'It's really villagey, I've never been somewhere in London that feels so community-driven. I'm constantly walking past people on the street that I have met or have chatted to in the coffee shop.'

PHOTO BY FRANCES DAVISON, @TILFRANCES, COURTESY PANDORA SYKES

ABOVE: Beginning her career at The Sunday Times Style, fashion has always been a big part of her life

'I always wanted to be a writer, it's by far my favourite thing'

Another joy has been decorating their new house, which is unsurprising from a woman who has worked extensively in style throughout her career. As well as carefully curated pieces, she tells me that her wallpaper is one of her prized possessions. And with William Morris in the hall, Cole & Son in bathroom and Christian Lacroix stripes in her daughter's room, I can't say I really blame her.

But while she adores Kensal Green, you'll also often find her wandering down Golborne Road at the weekends. 'I really like the veggie stacks at Bluebelles, I really like Lowry and Baker, Golborne Deli I adore and the Lisboa bakery is amazing – that's such a cult hotspot.' Having lived in Notting Hill for seven years before the move, she points out they won't be leaving the area any time soon. 'We're definitely both creatures of habit, we won't be moving from here for 487 years,' she jokes. 'And I can't take my wallpaper with me so it would be an instant loss.' ■

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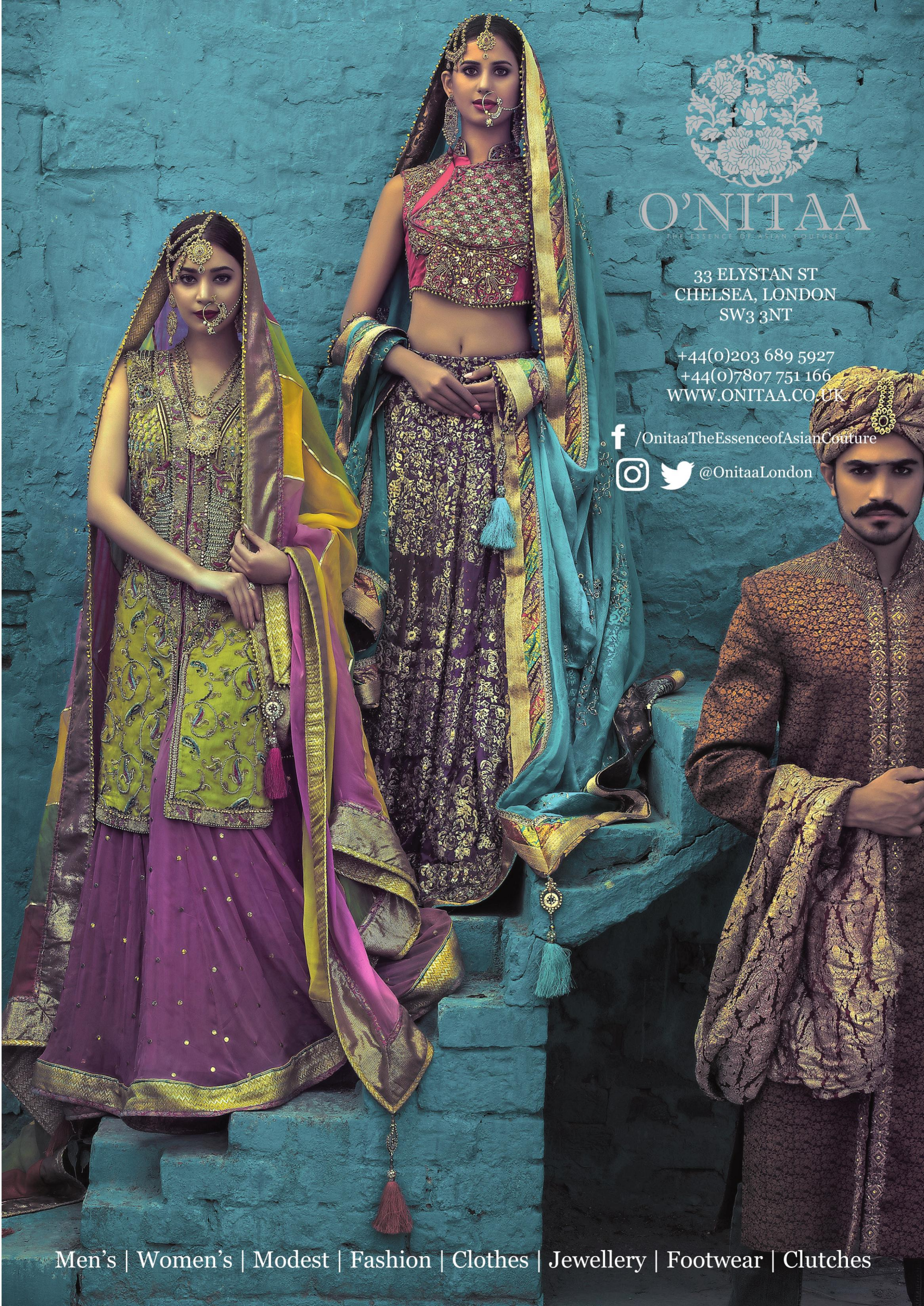
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A New IMAGE

We take a look inside the new Photography Centre at the V&A

Words: HANNAH LAWRENCE

An installation of over 150 cameras from the past 160 years greet visitors to the V&A's new Photography Centre. The new space, comprising four galleries, displays works from pioneering female photographers and newly commissioned prints alongside some of the oldest cameras in the world to showcase its extensive photography collection and tell the story of photography from its invention to the present day.

The new gallery space opens with the display 'Collecting Photography: From Daguerreotype to Digital', which draws from the V&A's collection of 800,000 photographs to showcase prints by pioneers such as Julia Margaret Cameron and Roger Fenton through to contemporary artists such as Eugene Atget and Bill Brandt, among others. There are a few notable gems here: images by the first female museum photographer, Isabel Agnes Cowper, an important figure in the V&A's history of documenting photography, and a botanical cyanotype by Anna Atkins, who is generally credited with being the first person to publish a book illustrated by photographic images. Beyond the prints the exhibition tries to tell a rounded narrative of the history of international photography displaying negatives, camera equipment and publications alongside the works themselves. Alongside the installation of cameras past and present there is an interactive camera station that gives visitors an insight into how photographers view the world through their equipment.

As Martin Barnes, Senior Curator of Photographs at the V&A, explains: 'The spaces and facilities allow visitors to access, explore and enjoy photography in its many forms.' Alongside the work by pioneering photographers the V&A commissioned two new pieces for the exhibition. The first, by German photographer Thomas Ruff, known for his manipulation and reimagining of existing images, is a series inspired by Victorian soldier and colonialist Linnaeus Tripe's 1850s paper negatives of India and Burma from the V&A's collection. Despite his experience manipulating images it is the first time Ruff has worked with negatives: here he has edited the images, enlarging them and drawing out certain details to pay homage to the quality of Tripe's original images. The original series of prints were put on display by the V&A back in 2015, but Ruff's editing give them new context and a fresh layer of meaning.

As Barnes explains: 'By digitally reinterpreting photographs made over 160 years ago in places such as Mysore, Rangoon (Yangon) and Trichinopoly (Tiruchirappalli), Ruff gives Tripe's evocative images a new context. He emphasises their hidden details, resurrecting them with spectacular new life. It's a kind of collaboration between artists that bridges the centuries, collapsing the distance in time between them.'

V&A Photography Centre - Render of Room 108 (c) David Kohn Architects

Sian Bonnell (b.1956), Beach Clean, 1999, C-type print © Sian Bonnell Victoria and Albert Museum

Frederick Scott Archer's wet-collodion camera, 1853 © The RPS collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum

Cecil Beaton, Queen Elizabeth II, Coronation Day, 1953, Gelatin silver print © Victoria and Albert Museum

John French and Daphne Abrams in a tailored suit, published in the TV Times, 1957 © John French Archive; Victoria and Albert Museum

The second commission comes in the form of a series on clouds by American artist Penelope Umbrico which will be displayed on the new 'Light Wall', a tool for displaying screen-based photography. Umbrico's '171 Clouds from the V&A Online Collection, 1630-1885, 2018' is the result of an exhaustive search through the V&A's online painting collection extracting details of clouds to explore the transition between different media forms. From the 'Light Wall' to the 'Dark Tent', a multimedia projection space inspired by 19th century photographers' travelling dark rooms, the new centre has incorporated new and interesting ways for showing photographs. The 'Dark Tent' will show films revealing early photographic processes, including daguerrotype – hence the exhibition title – calotype and collodion process. Another of the exhibition's gems is the lantern slides screened in the 'Dark Tent', which show the first attempts to reach the summit of Mount Everset in 1921 and 1922.

The new Photography Centre puts special focus on the medium in the museum's agenda. As Barnes explains: 'Photography is one of our most powerful forms of global communication, and I'm thrilled that we can contextualise the past and present of this powerful medium in new and exciting ways.'

Designed by David Kohn Architects, the opening of the photography centre completes the first stage of a two-part project to spotlight photography at the South Kensington museum. Part of the museums programme to revitalise areas of the space through contemporary design the centre aims to 'reclaim the beauty of three original 19th century picture galleries'. The second stage of the Photography Centre will expand the facilities further with a library, dark room and photographer's studio and is due to open in 2022. Cameras at the ready. ■

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IN WITH THE OLD

Give your rooms a new lease of life, with these handy tips on adding antique furniture to your home

Words: JUDITH PALMER

Feeling like a New Year spruce up, but don't have the time to completely redecorate? Why not use a piece of antique furniture to change the look of your room, without having to get the decorators in…

ENTRANCE HALL

Making a statement with an antique coat stand is a great way to impress any visitors that walk through your door, or a vintage wooden bench makes a great place to store shoes, with a place to sit and put them on too. If, however, space is tight, an alternative option is to hang up your favourite family photos in antique gilt frames. Black and white photos work best as they mix modern with vintage.

KITCHEN

The kitchen is the heart of the home, but can be expensive to renovate, so complement your modern cupboards and drawers with elegant and ornate light fixtures. If you have space, a chandelier will make a powerful statement and it's certain to become a talking point when you have visitors.

ABOVE: Make a statement in your entrance hall

RIGHT: Vintage taps are in demand

LEFT: A chandelier can add the wow factor in a kitchen

DINING ROOM

If comfort is more important to you than style, then antique dining chairs might not be a great option. However putting modern chairs around a rustic wooden dining table creates terrific contrast and style, without the discomfort. Also an antique carriage clock or candelabra make eye-catching centre pieces on any table.

BEDROOM

Add a little bit of elegance to the boudoir with an antique chair – don't be put off by the upholstery as this can be changed for a modern fabric. Instead look for stylish legs, or extra filigree work on the arms, these will really stand out in a modern setting. If you don't have room for a chair, how about a gilt frame French mirror: they add instant style without taking up any floor space.

BATHROOM

An antique free standing bath is something most homeowners dream of, but good quality ones can often be expensive and hard to find. So if budgets are tight why not opt for a modern bath with vintage fittings. Brass taps, towel rails, and radiators can add a splash of vintage style in a clean white bathroom.

LIVING ROOM

Rather than spend big on a vintage sofa, which while looking fabulous isn't always the comfiest place to snuggle down, invest in an elegant side table or dresser instead. They offer great storage solutions as well as adding style to your room, but when you're shopping make sure to have accurate room measurements, so you know what will fit. Don't be put off by handles and hinges either, as these can always be swapped for modern alternatives. ■

THE ANTI-GYM REVOLUTION

With the new year upon us, we explore the many different alternatives that there are to gyms in Mayfair and the surrounding areas

Words: MARY-JANE WILTSHER

As the annual tidal wave of #NewYearNewMe content floods our inboxes and social media feeds with shots of rippling abs and perky glutes, it's tempting to hunker down with the cheeseboard leftovers, unfollow the gym bunnies and wait out the storm. Throw in that other hallmark of January, the depleted bank statement, and calls to sign up for a costly gym membership rankle further.

Luckily there's a plethora of fitness classes, collectives and studios out there that pride themselves on offering unpretentious, cost-effective and – whisper it – fun alternatives to that uninspiring half hour on the treadmill. And with London's abundance of green space adding more al fresco options to the mix, residents of the capital are genuinely spoilt for choice.

Whether your motivation is to learn a new skill, get to know your community better, or work out with your kids in tow, odds are your postcode has you covered. And the other exciting part to this equation of no gyms is that there has also been something of an explosion in the wellness sector, with many new spa and holistic offerings in Mayfair, Chelsea, Fulham and the surrounding areas popping up. So, dust off those running shoes, put down the Mont d'Or, and join the anti-gym fitness revolution.

MAIN: Bamford Haybarn at Brompton Cross

ABOVE: Get out into the parks and explore boot camp alternatives

PARK LIFE

If fresh air and grass beneath your feet are on the agenda, try a Rabble session in Green Park or Regent's Park. These sociable workouts offer what would otherwise be described as a HIIT session disguised as a game of British bulldog or dodgeball – essentially, the trainers want participants to forget they're exercising (how kind). In reality, though, attendees are fine-tuning all sort of skills, from speed and endurance to coordination, and can clock up a whopping 10K in one session. (3-game pack £19.50, unlimited classes £39pm; joinrabble.com).

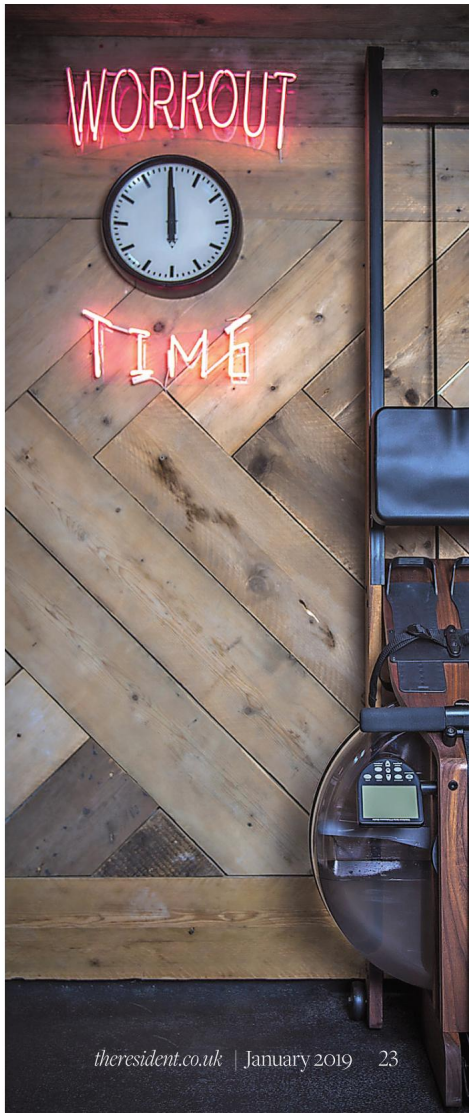
For those wanting to get a little more serious, popular military fitness collectives such as BMF offer a host of high-energy, no-fuss workouts combining cardio, strength training and toning in the beauty of Hyde Park. A signature workout is tailored to all ability levels, from newbies to pros, and there's also Active By BMF for health-conscious older adults, which blends movement with resistance training and is suitable for complete beginners with no exercise experience. (Unlimited sessions £34 per month; bemilitaryfit.com).

Husband and wife team Sam and Jenny Warrington are the brains behind Swift Fitness, a friendly and accessible take on boot camp fitness with a strict no-shouting policy. Available in Fulham and Green Park, as well as Parson's Green, Clapham Common and Battersea Park, sessions are divided into 7-minute bursts of team games, calorie-busting circuits and core-focused exercises. There are some imaginative twists on the format too, like the Silent Disco Boot Camp. (Single session £15, block of 5 £60; swiftfitnessgroup.co.uk).

Keen to keep things simple? Running community Parkrun host weekly runs at a variety of locations, including Fulham Palace. Each run is 5K and starts at 9am, with participants pitted against the clock rather than each other. This format offers an easy and rewarding means of charting progress, plus the chance to meet people in the neighbourhood. (Free, parkrun.org.uk).

OPEN WATER

Hardy souls willing to wetsuit-up and brave the Thames' waters are treated to some of the best views the city has to offer. With its deceptively gentle pace masking what is actually a top-to-toe workout, urban paddle boarding has swiftly amassed a dedicated following in recent years. Board novices can master the sport with Active360, who offer low-tide group lessons. After some land-based training at Paddington, you can explore Merchant's Square and Paddington Basin, and stop for some Scandinavian cosiness (or hygge) once you are out of the water at KuPP. (2hrs, £57; Active360.co.uk). ▸



'After land-based training in Paddington, you can explore Merchant's Square'

IN A DIFFERENT CLASS

Baby, it's cold outside, and sometimes a warm inside space is required. Innovative indoor classes on *The Resident* turf include Australian fitness concept F45 training, which brings something new to the mix with its imaginative boxing-inspired combat classes. Available at F45's Fulham, Paddington and Oxford Circus outposts, the class (dubbed, a little confusingly, 'Brixton') combines elements of boxing, MMA-style training and self-defence, and will roll out internationally this year. It's a pacey, 45-minute full-body blitz, delivered with a heap of good humour and encouragement (Introductory 2-week experience £59; F45training.co.uk).

For classes of a calmer variety, fast-growing boutique yoga brand MoreYoga prides itself on offering an accessible style of tuition and, best of all, gives back to the local community. Throughout the year, the team host special yoga classes in aid of local charities, community groups and projects, many of which take place at their Soho location, where the brand has swiftly amassed a loyal audience (From £32pm, moreyoga.co.uk).

From community helpers, to eco-warriors: Terra Hale bills itself as the capital's first fully eco-friendly fitness destination and its beautifully appointed Fulham studio offers intimate classes and bespoke personal training ▸

ABOVE: MoreYoga is becoming very popular

RIGHT: Terra Hale is an eco-friendly offering

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with a focus on sustainability. A 50-minute spin class here sees all the human energy converted into utility-grade electricity and put back into the grid, so participants can enjoy a high-octane workout while doing their bit for the environment. (Intro offer, sign up for any 3 classes, £30; for best rates book via RIG app).

HOLISTIC HAVEN

One of the most exciting developments in the spa and holistic side to fitness in our area is the addition of the Bamford Haybarn at Brompton Cross. The tranquil skylit studio offers a range of yoga, meditation and sound healing classes. Classes have been developed by their team of leading practitioners and authorities and will be accompanied by a rota of visiting experts offering ancient as well as the very latest developments in movement and healing therapies. Slow your mind and reconnect with yourself and your wellbeing.

'If you need a boost to your wellbeing, Bamford is the anti-gym for you'

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NEW HEIGHTS

Renowned chef Alex Dilling has plans for The Greenhouse that will wow everyone

Words: ALEXANDER LARMAN

Anyone who knows anything about fine dining in London, and more specifically Mayfair, will know about The Greenhouse, discreetly located in one of the city's most exclusive streets. Owned by restaurateur extraordinaire Marlon Abela, it has acquired a well-deserved reputation for the finest (two Michelin-starred) cuisine, a wine list the length of a telephone directory and for peerless service and attention to detail. Yet a restaurant is only as good as its head chef, and the latest culinary wizard to take over in the kitchen is Alex Dilling, who was formerly round the corner at Hélène Darroze at the Connaught. Dilling has been charged with making sure that The Greenhouse keeps its enviable reputation and to take it to new and further heights.

When asked about how his introduction to the restaurant

has been, Dilling replies: 'It has been an extremely exciting few months. I really enjoy putting a team together, which I think we have managed very well. I have been fortunate to have a lot of people that have worked with me before come on board. 2019 is going to be a really great year for us.' He knows, of course, that in just under a year's time, the next Michelin guide will be produced, and he will be expected to at least keep the restaurant at its current level, if not better. As he puts it: 'The Michelin stars will always add a certain amount of pressure. Our focus is guest experience. That is a pressure in itself. Our clients come here with very high expectations and we work tirelessly to make sure they are met.'

He has visited the restaurant before he became the new chef – 'I was fortunate to dine at The Greenhouse two times while Arnaud Bignon was here. He is a great chef with a unique approach to ingredient pairing and technique' – so it's familiar territory, although it represents something of a shift from his work with Darroze. He says: 'The internal structure will always be the big difference between a hotel operation and a free-standing restaurant. I have learned a lot in hotels in regards to management and procedures. That being said, in my current environment it allows me to be more involved in the operation as a whole, to really oversee all aspects of the guest experience.' One aspect of this is The Greenhouse's legendary wine list, which he has been heavily involved in. As he puts it: 'For the most part, at this level of restaurant you will always have a great wine list. We are fortunate to have one of the most extensive lists in London with over 3,500 references. What sets this list apart is the dialogue between the sommelier and I. This communication is where we can really create some special and fun pairings for our guests.'

'The dining scene in London is incredible'

Although he claims it's too early in the restaurant's operation for him to have established his own signature dishes, he tells us that there are a few that we can expect to see on the menu for some time. 'The oeuf noir, our foie gras and our interpretation of blanquette de veau are some of the highlights.' His relationship with Abela is a smoothly enjoyable one – 'We have a great relationship in regards to our shared passion of gastronomy and hospitality. I think we share a lot of the same values and opinions in what creates a special and unique dining experience' – and when he's not in the restaurant, he's sampling some of London's most interesting places to eat. 'I love seeing what's going on. The dining scene in London is incredible. At every level you are really spoilt for choice. I also love ▸

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reading cookbooks in my free time. I have a large collection from over the years. In terms of where I go, I have been to the Ledbury a few times now and it is fantastic. I really enjoy Mexican food and had a good meal at the newly opened El Pastor in King's Cross. I live in Notting Hill so tend to stay local on Sundays. The Ladbroke Arms is great, and Hereford Road, Pizza East are all regular haunts.'

It is a notoriously tricky time in the restaurant industry at the moment, in no small part due to Brexit; the number of closures every week are rocketing. Dilling has his own ideas how to make The Greenhouse work. 'I think it is really important to show great value for money within your category of restaurant, and securing regular guests and maintaining word of mouth. It is an extremely competitive market and without that quality, consistency and value, people will go on to the next place.' However, given the excellence and fame of the restaurant at which he's cooking, it seems likely that Alex Dilling's own career, like his establishment's, will go from strength to strength. r

greenhouserestaurant.co.uk

THE MUSE OF MAYFAIR

With it's ever-changing ideas and its developments year on year, the Mews of Mayfair is leading the way in luxury hospitality

Words: BETHAN ANDREWS

Due to the fact that the popular Mayfair dining and drink destination of Mews of Mayfair is always changing up its offerings each season, and offers so many different options under one establishment, it's perhaps not surprising that it is often seen at the forefront of the Mayfair luxury gourmet and hospitality scene. It's rare to find an establishment with so much under one roof, and they really do push the business and its boundaries each year.

And that doesn't show any signs of slowing down, with the quaint courtyard destination having just opened a new, separate wine shop and bar – and one that focuses on a number of very rare, and ludicrously expensive, vintages being offered. Quite rarely, though, guests are able to buy the fine and rare wines by the glass from a constantly evolving, carefully curated list of wines from all over the world at every price point. With the emphasis firmly on tasting and enjoying, there will also be a cheese and charcuterie menu, to accompany the wines. Customers can try something new, with the aim that both experienced and amateur wine lovers should head home with something they love.

'The location is very special in the 18th century courtyard'

The new venture is being led by Chief of Operations Derryn Nel, who has recently moved from Angela Hartnett's popular Merchant's Tavern. 'It's a very exciting challenge as Mews is five different businesses under one umbrella,' she tells me. 'The location is amazing and I immediately fell in love with it – it's so quaint. But to be honest, I love wine and I'm very much into the wine business, so the wine shop was an exciting project for me to get involved in.'

So, what does Nel believe Mews of Mayfair offers people and what does she think makes it stand out from the crowd? It strikes me that it is the breadth of choice that really sets it apart, and Nel seems to agree. 'The location is very special in the 18th century courtyard straight off the hustle and bustle,' she smiles.

'It's got such a nice buzz to it and there is literally something for everyone. In Mayfair, you assume everything is going to be super expensive, but we are very much making it so that there is something for everyone. The wine room is a retail shop, so everything you have in it can also be taken away with you – we are curating everything and it's a little bit different.' Nel goes on to tell me about how Mews of Mayfair changes up their offerings each quarter. It might simply involve menu changes, but every small detail is reassessed. For winter at Mews, expect lots of game birds on the menu and hearty dishes such as their take on the traditional sausage and mash.

And having had the pleasure of enjoying both the Mews Pizza Co. and the Courtyard, I can assure you that you won't be disappointed by what is on offer at this iconic place. The food is to die for, with steak even making its way onto the top of a pizza, and the ambience is just perfect.

So, what are their plans for 2019? 'With so much in the area, doing so much as well, it's important to stay on top of the trends. So for January we are working on our vegan offerings for Veganuary,' says Nel.

'It's looking ahead and staying ahead of the trend. The wine shop is my baby and wine has become so exciting in the next few years, so I'm excited to have this new room where we can do what we want! We do have quite a lot of other big plans, but I'm afraid that you will have to wait and see on those!' r

mewsofmayfair.com

FOOD *REVIEW*

Brindisa, Battersea

It's been almost a year since I first visited Circus West Village in Battersea Power Station for my first restaurant review for *SW Resident* and the change in the area has been quite something to behold. It has transformed in that time into something of an established community, which has been helped in no small way by the wealth of wonderful restaurants that have moved into the area.

And Brindisa's new Battersea opening is no exception. Sandwiched between Fiume and the Wright Brothers, the restaurant opened quietly in November under the watchful eye of founder Monika Linton, marking the sixth London opening for the Spanish tapas bar and one of its biggest yet.

Given that Brindisa are known for their phenomenal hampers and deliveries of top-quality Spanish food, it should probably come as little surprise that the sourcing of their dishes are impecable. This was apparent from the off when my guest and I tucked into a delicious selection of our Ibérico charcuterie, including Jamón Ibérico de cebo, Salchichón, Lomo and Chorizo.

In all honesty, there wasn't a dud dish on the menu, with cured smoked beef, dark chocolate and Manchego cheese a clear winner with my guest, whereas I couldn't pick between the chilli prawns and the Huevos Rotos (the wonderful combination of broken egg, fried potatoes and sobrasada). If you have any room left, go for the almond tart – you won't regret your choice.

And while I must admit when I visit tapas restaurants, I'm often overwhelmed by the sheer amount of choice on offer, the staff at Brindisa were extremely knowledgable, recommending plenty of dishes. But the best recommendation was the absolutely divine fried goat's cheese and honey that we started with – if you choose any dish on the menu, make sure it's this one. To get into the fiesta spirit, I also suggest the Red Wine Sangria jug as a perfect accompaniment to the dishes.

It's certainly a cosy set up, with elegant decorations reminding you of the inspiration for the food you're eating, without overpowering it. The atmosphere on an early Saturday evening was lively, and began to pick up with plenty of punters arriving. And it certainly seems a good omen how many Spanish conversations we overheard when were enjoying our meal. Overall, on a cold winter's evening, Brindisa seems to be the perfect place to enjoy some Spanish spirit and forget about the ongoing dark nights. Make sure you book a table now – this is not an opening you want to miss.

Battersea Power Station, 25 Circus Road West, SW11 8EZ; brindisakitchens.com

RESIDENT RATING
★★★★★

WORDS BY FAY WATSON; TOP BRINDISA IMAGE BY STEVE JOYCE; BOTTOM BRINDISA IMAGE BY ADAM LUSZNIAK; ACAI BERRY BY JOAS SOUZA - JOASPHOTOGRAPHER.COM; DIOGENES THE DOG BY DANIEL OGUILEWICZ, PHOTOLARDER.COM

THE QUICK LIST

Don't miss out on some of the hot news and openings this month

Peruvian flavours

Peruvian restaurant COYA in Mayfair has recently added a host of new plant-based dishes to their à la carte menu. Guests can tuck into a variety of starters including Celeriac tataki with cepes, hazelnuts and Tofu skewers with spring onion, peppers and crispy quinoa.
118 Piccadilly, Mayfair, W1J 7NW; coyarestaurant.com

Mayfair dining

The newly opened Onima in Mayfair has announced a new lunchtime offering in its wonderful townhouse setting. Available now, guests can choose from an array of dishes all infused with an amalgam of Mediterranean and Asian flavours from warm 'Saganaki' cheese to aubergine fritters with tzatziki.
Onima, 1-3 Avery Row, Mayfair, W1K 4AJ; onimarestaurant.com

C'est chic

A new immersive dining and late-night party concept is opening this month in London. Inspired by the iconic Studio 54 which electrified New York's nightlife in the 1970s and 80s, Disco54 at Café de Paris is aiming to take over the nightlife scene with entertainment abound.
Café de Paris, 3-4 Coventry Street, W1D 6BL

A real flair

Notting Hill is now home to a brand new contemporary Italian restaurant called Artisan. Opened by the team behind another Notting Hill favourite, Japanese restaurant UKAI, you can expect some of its influence on the new spot, alongside traditional Italian dishes.
222 Portobello Road, W11 1LJ; artisanrestaurant.co.uk

Drink up

This Burns Night, The Glenlivet Glade at Rosewood London will raise a dram to Scottish national poet Robert Burns with a special pie and whisky supper.
For one night only, Holborn Dining Room's Executive Chef and piemaster, Calum Franklin, will serve a menu of typical Scottish dishes and ingredients.
252 High Holborn, WC1V 7EN

Tables turned

The Laslett in Notting Hill has recently launched a new night dedicated to music called Turntable Tuesdays. The boutique hotel bar invites guests and customers to bring their vinyls along and listen to their favourite records every Tuesday evening.
8 Pembridge Gardens, Notting Hill, W2 4DU

Health kick

Acai Berry has just opened a new superfood bar on the King's Road in Chelsea. The Brazilian superfood brand gained overnight popularity when David Beckham was spotted enjoying an acai bowl and now west Londoners can see what the fuss is about themselves.
247 King's Road, SW3 5EL; acaiberryfoods.com

Back with a bang

After nine months and a complete re-build, No. Fifty Cheyne is opening up in Chelsea Embankment next month. This new Chelsea local will be launching as a restaurant and cocktail bar, all focussed around an open grill offering modern British dishes.
50 Cheyne Walk, SW3 5LR; fiftycheyne.com

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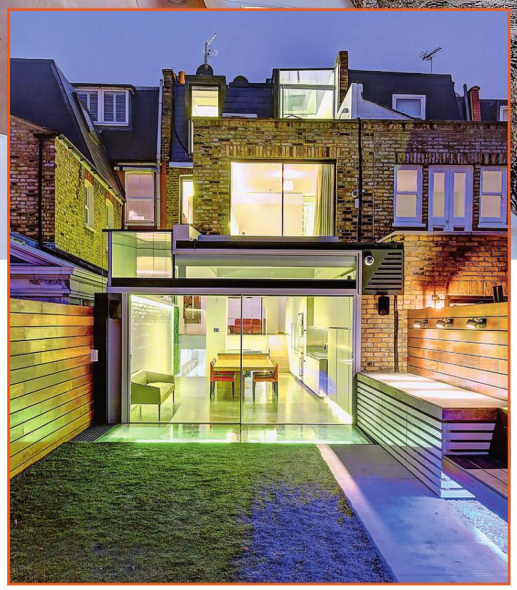

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Designed to Impress

Having wowed everyone with her Coldplay cover and collaboration with Paul Smith on Albemarle Street, we delve into Kristjana Williams' secrets of success

Words: EMILY MANSON

Witnessing someone's career taking flight is a joy, especially when they've earned their success through lots of hard work, perseverance and sheer talent.

That's how it is with Kristjana Williams, the Icelandic artist who has taken the design world by storm. Not so much an overnight success, as a tornedo gathering momentum, her recent collaboration with iconic designer Paul Smith and design for the front cover of Coldplay's latest album saw her bring 2018 to a close on an incredible high, with more dizzy heights to be reached this coming year.

Self-depreciating and humble, her flamboyant, intelligent and multi award-winning art is filled with brightly coloured animals, birds, botanicals and curiosities. Her unique style has hit a zeitgeist that's seen a trail of artists follow in her wake, as well as high profile commissions including a 21st century tapestry of London, commissioned for The Shard, designing the legendary Christmas displays for Fortnum & Mason and creating pieces for the Rio Olympics.

It was, in fact, her unique style that led to her original collaboration with Paul Smith's team over four years ago, when Williams was invited to feature in his Heathrow T5 store. After regularly selling out, she staged her first exhibition with him in Melrose Avenue in LA.

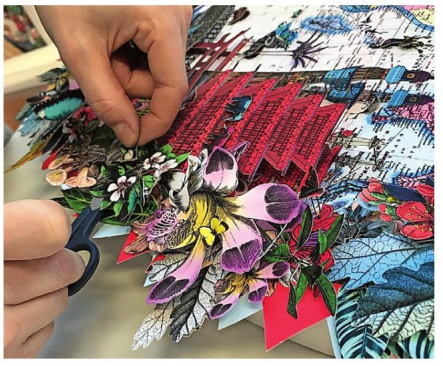
'My style just seemed to really click with his clientele. He likes to offer his clients an experience that other retailers can't. When my work goes in, it feels like it should have always been there, so it fits well and one thing just led to another,' Williams says.

'I love working with Victoriana, maps and curiosities'

Their work together culminated in a show in the flagship Regent Street store last November, with Williams creating a map and story of two creatures that travel the world. 'I love working with Victoriana, maps and curiosities, so I made up a story about travelling explorers. It was a great excuse to use a lot of ideas which had been floating around in my brain for a while.'

The show went incredibly well. 'I'm so pleased people understood and connected with the story. Sometimes you do a big show and sell only two things, but it's been commercially successful too, so everyone's happy and I'm really relieved!' she adds disarmingly.

Her original collaborations with Paul Smith were, she says, created by looking from the outside into his creative world and what's he's achieved. But with this latest exhibition, she toured his studio where, she explains: 'He took me by the hand and we ran around this incredible cave of a billion things that could inspire you to the end of your days. It was so inspiring to see how fearless and crazy his mind is. Meeting someone so driven, passionate and full of mental energy is so incredible, like they're literally a little on fire. And you can see how that energy carries through ▸



to anyone who works for him.'

Coldplay's lead singer, Chris Martin, had the same quality, she says. 'He has that burning energy too and is the driving force for all four of them and then some! It helps explain their success. It's a wonderful thing and it becomes easy to see why people follow them and why they get the success they get – there's just no other way. They're so unquestionable and so driven.'

Although she doesn't make the connection, it's clear that Williams is built from the same stuff. After studying at Central St Martins, becoming creative director at collective Beyond the Valley, and creating the KSW Studio in 2012, she readily admits she's made a lot of 'painful mistakes', but her creative energy is also impossible to stifle.

'There is nothing else I would ever do and even if it was not successful, I would still have to do it every day. I just feel extremely lucky that it is working out and never take it for granted.' She never thought it would work out the way it has. 'I'm not sure if it's connected to my dyslexia, but my brain does work a bit differently and it's part stupidity, part resolute determination to do what you want to do that makes me never quite aware of the risk, so I keep going and learn a little every year.'

And this year is full of yet more promise. There are plans to work again with Paul Smith, as well as continuing her brand collaborations with Penhaligon's – where she's just been made creative director – and Royal Salut whisky, where the old heritage brand's fascinating backstory has fuelled her imagination for a contemporary redesign.

'There is nothing else I would ever do, even if it was not successful'

So what does she think defines the root of her success? For sure, her Icelandic heritage plays a big part. 'I think the elements are so strong and fierce. The creativity of growing up where nature slightly bashes you around the head and is totally in charge is one of those things you really only appreciate when you're out of it. But I think all of my work has Iceland as its foundation.'

Continual evolution is also key and her designs have more depth and are more intense than a few years ago. She says: 'Sometimes I think there are too many things coming out of my brain, but I want people to see things they haven't seen before. I promised myself I always would keep changing and I'm happy that people at the recent show felt really that.'

And, finally, she adds: 'As Paul Smith says, he is inspired by everything. From the tallest building to the launderette. He's just completed a wall covering with pencil sharpenings and it looks so beautiful. It just shows anything and everything can look beautiful.' ■

Williams and Paul Smith

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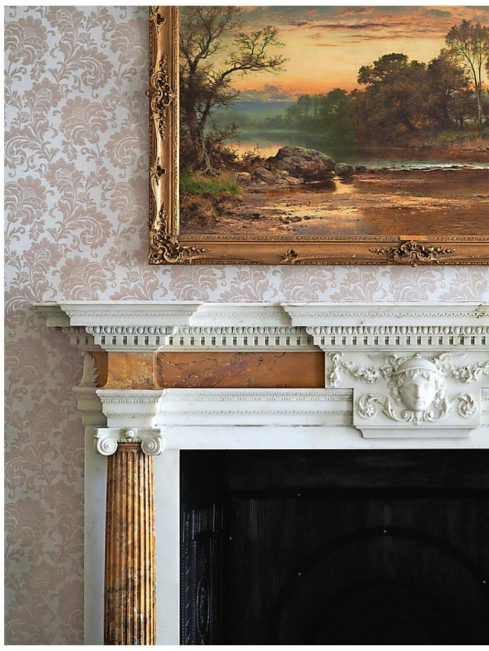
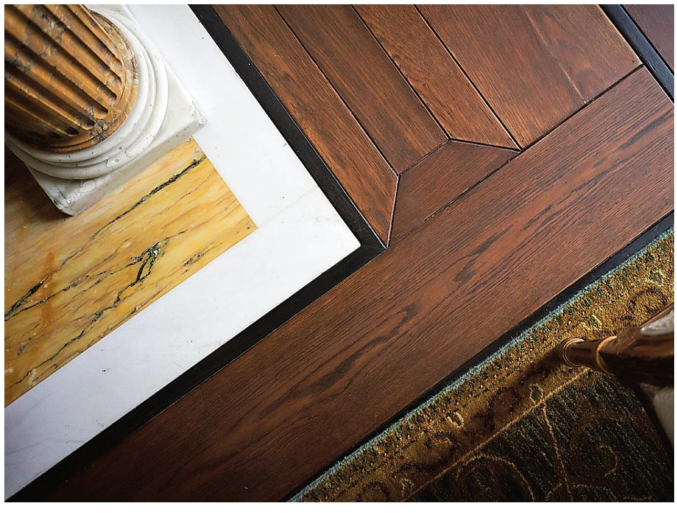
TIME CAPSULE

Oz Lancaster explains how she and her team transformed a Grade II listed townhouse into a family home equipped for the 21st century

Words: ELLIE FELLS





The project you see here wasn't just a straight-forward piece of interior design. It was more than that, it was a journey that required us to try out all sorts of approaches along the way.' So says Oz Lancaster, the founding force behind OS Designs. The project in question was the complete transformation of a huge 1740s Grade II listed townhouse in Hyde Park, unveiled last September after five years of work. It is evident that this was a project like no other, not just in terms of its scale, but in terms of the emotion and energy that went into it. Lancaster's client had owned the site since 1989, but with little work carried out in the years since, it was in need of a hefty revamp for it to become a home suitable for him and his extensive family.

Lancaster and her team were under instructions to gut the property and start again from scratch, but what quickly became apparent was that this house had history, quite literally, in its walls. Contractors found that some of the rooms were still suffering

structural damage as a result of bombing in World War Two, and as years of decoration were peeled away, they found snippets of newspapers and cigarette boxes dating back to 1912. 'We even found one photo where a workman had written: "Me and my mistress"!' Lancaster laughs. Many of the house's original features had remained intact beneath the 1980s décor, but their fragile state meant that preserving them would be easier said than done. 'On the first floor we found original cornicing, but the next day we walked in and it had all gone because the whole thing had just crashed to the floor,' Lancaster remembers.

However, one of the best preserved parts of the house was the main hallway, which has changed little since the 18th century. 'The alcoves have all been there since the house was first built, as well as all the columns bar one which we had to replicate,' Lancaster explains. Today, it affords a spectacular welcome to visitors: a spiral staircase is complemented by a chandelier and ornate floor, and Lancaster's decoration of the walls with silk paper adds to the regal feel.

Also on the ground floor is the expansive main living room, which again has been styled in close keeping with the house's history. The original cornicing ▸

'The colour scheme was inspired by the position of the sun'

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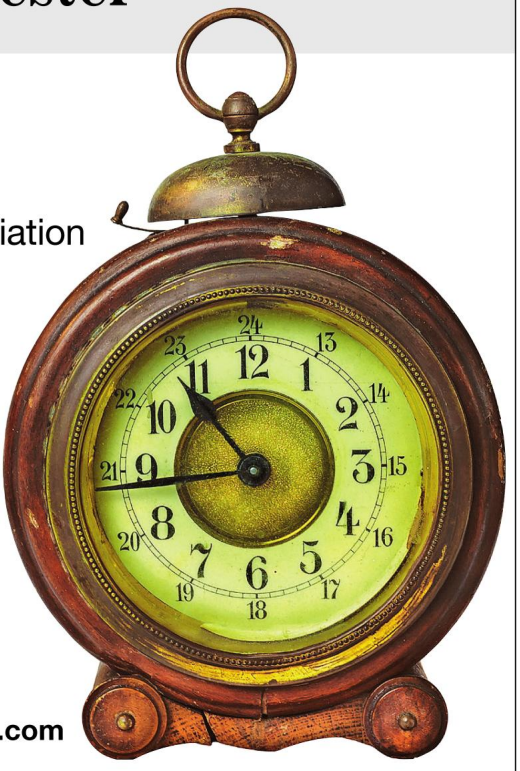

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could not be salvaged so the team carefully replicated it, and the bespoke parquet flooring was also designed to blend seamlessly with the surroundings. 'I didn't want it to look like the rooms had just had a massive make-over,' Lancaster explains. The designs also worked carefully to incorporate the client's extensive artwork collection, which now adorns the walls. 'The colour scheme wasn't only guided by the artwork, though,' she adds. 'It was also inspired by the position of the sun and a mismatch of different styles because we didn't want everything to look the same.' The room is a blend of golds and blues, giving it a contemporary twist. 'We wanted a light room with a French essence, and I think that's what we've achieved,' Lancaster says.

Below ground is an enormous basement, housing a kitchen, four bedrooms, six bathrooms, a living room and a TV room. Before Lancaster's project began, a concrete staircase had led down from the ground floor. 'It used to completely block out the light, so I had to get rid of it,' she explains. 'We drilled through for about four months straight and probably drove the neighbours crazy!' Lancaster's work also led to the discovery of vaulted ceilings, which have the effect of opening the space up so that it is bright and airy. The state-of-the art kitchen leads through to a more contemporary living room, where there are double doors opening out into the garden. On the first floor are further bedrooms with bespoke furniture and bathrooms, as well as the client's study. The house has also been completely sound-proofed throughout to ensure that it is a space for relaxation too, and despite the proximity of a main road, 'you can hear a pin drop in there'.

As might be expected with something of this scale, however, the project was not without its challenges. The house had numerous structural issues that urgently needed addressing, from unstable balconies through to asbestos in the ceilings. Lancaster also had to liaise with a whole army of different contractors. 'At one point we had 78 people on site,' she laughs. 'I said things to them exactly how it was, because if I didn't put my foot down they would have looked at me as though I didn't know what I was talking about.'

However, what's for certain is that Lancaster's grit and determination have paid off: she has created a home that exudes luxury on an unprecedented scale. 'I breathed, ate and slept with this project,' she says. 'But five years later, after we'd finished the whole thing, I was walking around the house on my own and I just thought, "yeah, we have nailed it".' ■

osdesigns.co.uk

carlhansen.com

JOYFUL TOGETHERNESS

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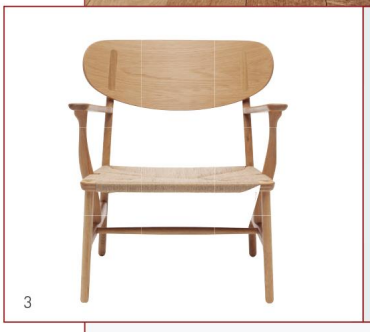
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Christmas and New Year is the season where we gather round the dining table or sink into a comfortable chair with a good book - both youngsters as well as seniors.
We enjoy togetherness and let time "stand still for a while". Here are some suggestions making the season more pleasant and joyful.

1. MK99190 Grandchild chair. Design: Mogens Koch. The iconic folding chair in children's version. Beech and white washed canvas. Retail price £ 506

2. CH24 Wishbone Chair. Design: Hans J. Wegner. On the occasion of Carl Hansen & Søn's 110th birthday, we launch a set of brand-new colors and a selection of the classic variants at a very special birthday campaign price in a period ending 31. December. New colours: Rosy Blush, Russet Red, Deep Burgundy, Oyster Grey, Forest Green, Deep Olive. Birthday campaign price £ 500.
Black painted oak/natural paper cord, black painted beech/natural paper cord. Soaped oak/natural paper cord, oiled oak/natural papercord, soaped beech/natural paper cord. Birthday campaign price £ 500.

3. CH22. Design: Hans J. Wegner. Beautiful and comfortable lounge chair. Retail price from £ 2,065

4. Calot pendant. Design Bonderup & Thorup. Dia. 650mm. Available in: Black, white and dark green. Exclusively made for Carl Hansen & Søn. Retail price £ 525. Also available in polished brass. Retail price £ 870

5. Champagne glasses. Mouthblown Murano Crystal created by the Italian glass artisan Nason Moretti. Exclusively made for Carl Hansen & Søn. Retail prices from £ 67

6. Sheep skin. Top quality long haired sheepskin from Island. Available in 5 variants: White, black, brown, multicolo-red/spotted and grey. Retail prices from £ 116

7.Travel Bag Liberte in Goat leather natural and in black from £ 484

8. Wool blankets. Made of 100% pure wool. Hand woven blankets from Portugal. Available in 7 colors. Retail price £ 120.

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MAX IT OUT

Be bold and team vibrant patterns, prints and pigments for a stand-out decorating look that proves more really can be more

Story: KARA O'REILLY

Blue tones

Graham & Brown has designated this rich teal as its colour of the year for 2019. Here it shows how dramatic it can be when used to create an all-enveloping feel. The wallpaper breaks up the wrap-round effect with a shot of Chinoiserie-influenced pattern.

Tiru teal emulsion, £38 per 2.5l; Tori teal wallpaper, £50 per 10m roll, both grahambrown.com

Bold as brass

Botanicals, a bright bathtub, brass accents and a bold chevron floor? On paper it really shouldn't work, but this dramatic design by Maurizio Pellizoni pulls it off.

Tweed bath with gloss painted exterior, from £3,420; The Leawood floor-standing brass bath and shower mixer, from £3,090; freestanding brass towel rail, from £4,620, all drummonds-uk.com

New Victorians

House of Hackney is celebrated as the pioneer of the new maximalist approach to decorating, with collections that embrace 19th century influences, as well as plenty of dramatic colourways. This is the place to head if you want your curtains to match your walls to co-ordinate with your cushions – you get the drift…

Majorelle wallpaper in petrol, £185 per 180x300cm roll; Majorelle velvet, £120 per m; Ananas black lamp base, £495, with Daley lampshade in Palme Cashmir, £140; Saber Bloomsbury loveseat in Midnight, £3,495; Saber jacquard cushion in Midnight, £165; De Beauvoir screen in Mamounia, £3,295, all houseofhackney.com

Soft modern

The new maximalism is as much about colour – try power pastels – and tactile finishes – such as brass, marble, velvet – as it is about pattern. Mix up luxe-leaning materials for a look that makes a subtler nod to the whole mood.

Paipai sofas, from £3,492 each; Ecume rug, £1,038; Parachute pendant lights, from £244 each; Cupidon tables, £496 each; Oxydation tables, from £608 each; Ura mirror, from £327, all ligne-roset.com

Make an Entrance

Hallways are frequently one of the darkest spaces in a home, so why not embrace that fact and make a feature of it by decorating in an over-scaled floral? It will certainly make a strong first impression on any visitors.
Matilija Moonlight wallpaper by Lake August, £180 per 27in x 5 yd roll, thefabriccollective.com

Boldly botanical

Cole & Son's latest collection, Botanical Botanica, features 16 prints influenced by the English countryside, whether that's classic cottage gardens or rolling meadowlands. The prints include floral favourites such as lilac, camellias and sweet peas, as well as this lovely woodland design.

Power flowers

Still feeling nervous about combining different prints? A way to get round this is by selecting one pattern you love – such as this fabulous floral – and teaming up a couple of its available colourways.
V&A Thurloe sofa in Love Birds Saffron, £2,999, sofaworkshop.com

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Bright and beautiful

Fashion designer Matthew Williamson is known for his kaleidoscopic prints that reference a whole host of global influences. His vibrant collections for wallpaper house Osborne & Little bring his signature aesthetic into the home.

Talavera wallpaper, £76 per 10m roll; Cushions made from Talavera fabric, £64 per m; both osborneandlittle.com

Mid-century magic

The new maximalism isn't just about pattern – it's about styling up your stuff as well. A cleverly curated selection of *objets* in co-ordinating colours is a way of adding interest to all manner of spots about the house.

Harlequin credenza, £3,950; Globo lamp, £995; Ronchamp vases, from £58 each; Bel Air mega scoop vase, £395; all uk.jonathanadler.com

In the pink

Design studio 2LG teamed up with kitchen specialists John Lewis of Hungerford and lighting specialists Cameron Design House to come up with this joyous kitchen that demonstrates the utility areas of the home can be fun as well as functional.

Capsule light by Cameron Design House with 2LG Studio, from £2,600, camerondesignhouse.com. The Rise Kitchen by 2LG Studio for John Lewis of Hungerford, to order, john-lewis.co.uk. Stanley table by Olivia Aspinall x 2LG Studio, to order, olivia-aspinall.com. Afteroom dining chairs by Menu, £321 each, twentytwentyone.com. Matt emulsion paint, £46 for 2.5l, mylands.com

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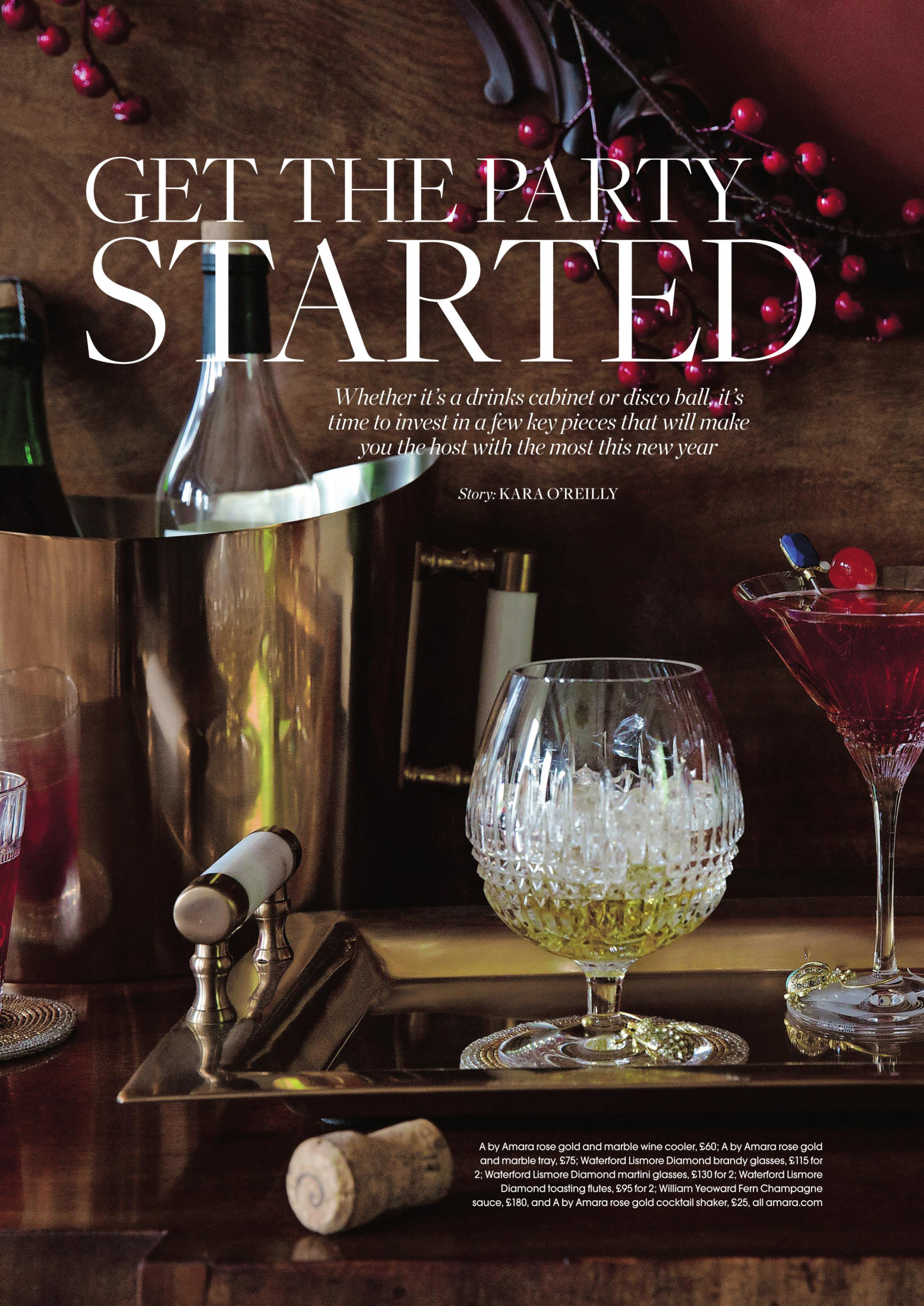
GET THE PARTY STARTED

Whether it's a drinks cabinet or disco ball, it's time to invest in a few key pieces that will make you the host with the most this new year

Story: KARA O'REILLY



A by Amara rose gold and marble wine cooler, £60; A by Amara rose gold and marble tray, £75; Waterford Lismore Diamond brandy glasses, £115 for 2; Waterford Lismore Diamond martini glasses, £130 for 2; Waterford Lismore Diamond toasting flutes, £95 for 2; William Yeoward Fern Champagne sauce, £180, and A by Amara rose gold cocktail shaker, £25, all amara.com

1. Black and gold pinwheel decorations, £14.99 for 6, *partypieces.co.uk* 2. Disco ball, from £140, *rockettstgeorge.co.uk* 3. Seeded glass tealight holder in Smoke, £4, *marksandspencer.com* 4. Serve punch bowl and ladle, £80, *lsa-international.com* 5. Vintage martini glass, £16 for 2, *nudeglass.com* 6. Marble condiment set, £36, *oliverbonas.com* 7. Glacier whisky rocks, £16 for 6, *debenhams.com* 8. Gold-plated cocktail shaker, £45, *grahamandgreen.co.uk* 9. Victrola Park Avenue 5-1 Bluetooth briefcase-style turntable Music Centre with built-In stereo speakers and USB conversion, £159.99, *amazon.co.uk/launchpad*

10. Lithe ottoman in orange velvet, from £950, *rume.co.uk* **11.** Glitterati mini party poppers, £5 for 10, *talkingtables.co.uk* **12.** Twisted glass jug, £45, oka.com **13.** Rocket vodka decanter, £198, *uk.jonathanadler.com* **14.** Scented candle, from £50, *victoriacator.com* **15.** Hudson Small Bar in Fury Black, £3,125, *timothyoulton.com* **16.** Gold wine drinks stand, £134, *audenza.com* **17.** Muuto Nerd barstool, £345, *nest.co.uk* **18.** Mima record table, £795, *johneadon.co.uk* **19.** Soiree bar set, £30, *habitat.co.uk* **20.** Gold compressed air confetti cannon, £1.99, *gingerray.co.uk* **21.** Cora drinks trolley in brass, £169, *made.com* **22.** Dot string lights, £40, *coxandcox.co.uk* **23.** Cuisinart electric wine opener, £45, *johnlewis.com* **24.** Master Cleanse glasses, £128 for 4, *uk.jonathanadler.com* **25.** Chandler stool in orange velvet, £295, *andrewmartin.co.uk* **26.** Pascali bar cabinet, £549, *atkinandthyme.co.uk*

Popstar bar, £2,550, busterandpunch.com

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HOMES INSIDER

Kara O'Reilly rounds up the latest in interiors

KARA'S CHOICE

New vintage

As someone who periodically loses hours of my life perusing original mid-century pieces by Brit design duo John and Sylvia Reid for Stag online, I was delighted to stumble across re-issues of some of the original designs at Clerkenwell Design Week. A joint venture by scions of both dynasties, the first 13 pieces of the S range are now finally available to purchase. I'm just waiting for them to turn their attention to the smaller C range dressing table I have been hankering after…

Prices from £449 for a dining chair, see johnandsylviareid.com for more information and to order

Person of interest

MATT KEHOE

Matt Kehoe is one of those behind-the-scenes designers whose work you will recognise, although you might not know of him. He is the man responsible for the jewel-hued Mixology range of glassware that has given a contemporary twist to heritage brand Waterford Crystal. Waterford-born himself and following studies in Industrial Design, he became the youngest ever person to join the company's design department and in the subsequent years has worked his way up through the ranks to Design Director. His latest collection is the new Gin Journey range for all the artisan gin lovers out there – and there are plenty of them – while the Diamond Line series has a timeless old Hollywood feel to it. Whatever your poison, all are future heirloom pieces that will give a lift to any festive gathering – after all, there really is nothing like light reflecting off crystal to bring sparkle to a celebration.

Prices from £75 for a pair of Gin Journey balloon glasses (waterford.co.uk)

Hot off the press

Good housekeeping

Anna Murray and Grace Winteringham, the duo behind pattern powerhouse, Patternity, have teamed up with Tribal Textiles, a Zambian-based organisation, to create a range of hand-painted kitchen textiles and homewares emblazoned with their signature geometric prints. Tribal Textiles supports more than 100 artisan workers to earn living wages and the collection uses the traditional technique of starch batik to create the crackle-effect designs. Just the thing to give you a lift as the January blues set in, plus you will be aiding a good cause at the same time – so win, win.

Prices start at £28, shop.tribaltextiles.co.zm

Mini trend

Striking starbursts

Starburst coffee table, £499, westelm.co.uk

Decorative prickle ball, £35, audenza.com

Starburst chandelier, £595, grahamandgreen.co.uk

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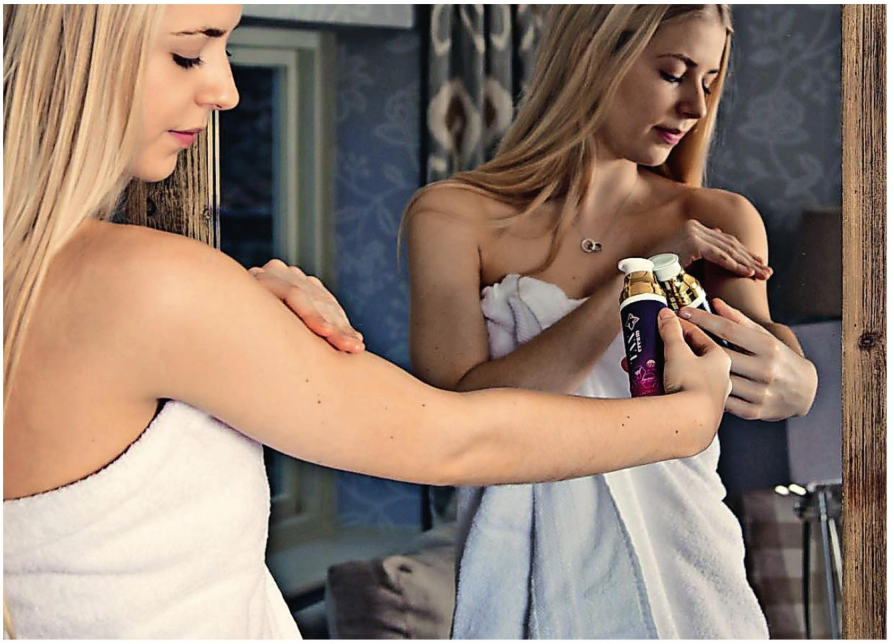
Curiously...

I always think a new year is a good time to make changes but not in any huge way. Small tweaks are enough to liven things up a bit in one's fragile post-festive state. One way to make a simple transformation is through a new fragrance. My favourite at the moment is Curionoir. These fragrances are dense, long lasting and as they are applied directly to the skin and not through an atomiser are redolent of a glamorous past of boudoirs and powder puffs.

From £150 for 50ml, selfridges.com



TAN TALK

During the winter you can get a real boost from a sun-kissed look and here is a great way to do it – Tan Cream, a face and body cream that delivers instant bronzing and advanced anti ageing treatment. I absolutely adore its creamy easy to apply texture and the completely natural look when the colour develops. It's a gradual bronzer so you can control how dark you want to be, which works for pale winter skin. The cream was created by Gillian Robinson and Katy Foxcroft after the former was diagnosed with an aggressive form of skin cancer and was unable to find a self tan that included sunscreen. She had a vision to create a tan cream with safe sun coverage and she has already won awards with the unique formulation.

Tan Cream, £39.95, tancream.co.uk

3 *of the best* STATEMENT NAIL COLOURS

Hippy chic, *£14.50, nailberry.co.uk*

Le Vernis Flamboyance, *£22, chanel.com*

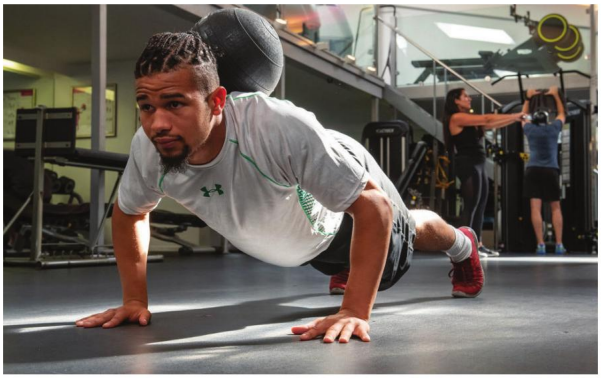
Red, *£12, leightondenny expertnails.com*

New year, new look

As if we couldn't adore Tom Ford any more, his new Winter Soleil collection hits beauty counters. Gorgeous Snow Queen frosted shades of lipstick, a pretty eye and cheek palette create the perfect look for winter, and glow drops give the skin a dewy look. It really is the most luxurious way to revamp your look for the new year.

Soleil Eye and Cheek Palette, £98, tomford.co.uk

WORDS: JANET REEDER



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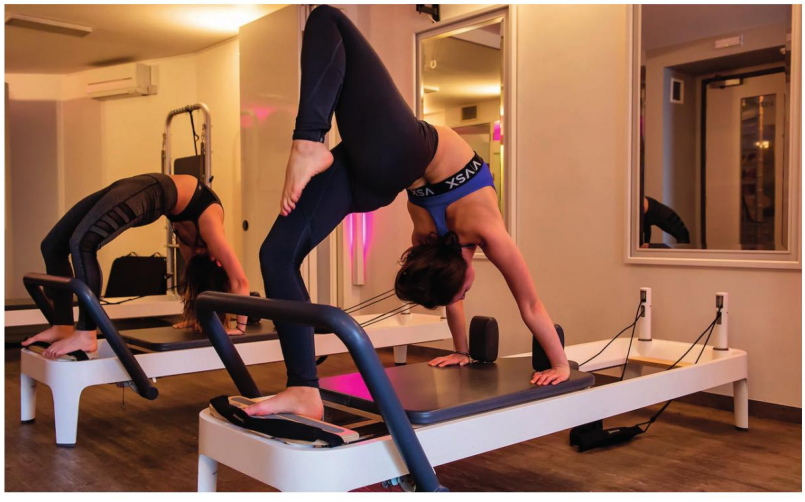

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3 of the best QUILTED COATS

Stud jacket, *£745, escada.com*

Reefer, *£139, crewclothing.co.uk*

Reversible, *£89.95, whitestuff.com*

Bags of style

We adore the latest drop for 2019 from brand fave Joseph Ribkoff – the gorgeous new bag collection. The designs include dinky evening bags in sugar hues, backpacks in dazzling silver and pretty totes, all of which have been created to fit perfectly with the glamorous clothing range.

Pictured here is the Casablanca, £159, josephribkoff.com

DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER

Not only do you buy a ring, you have the opportunity to help create it thanks to Vashi. Craftsmen, known as Alchemists, are on hand to show you how to select the most perfect diamonds for them and even help to secure them. The process allows customers to explore not only craft and innovation, but also to create a truly unique and deeply meaningful piece. Not only that but as part of the whole experience you can take home your own Love Story – a personal keepsake in the form of a box and mini film containing photographs captured from your jewellery making. Ahh!

vashi.com

THE LOUNGE FACTOR

January is all about staying in the nest. After the full-on partying of the festive season it's just the best thing curling up on the sofa watching a box set of your favourite show. But fashionistas won't want to let the side down sartorially. Lounging elegantly is what it's all about and it doesn't get more elegant than a pair of silk pyjamas. The ones pictured here are from the Pure Collection and are in a mixture of silk and cotton.

£199, purecollection.com

WORDS: JANET REEDER

STREAM

For a car with a vision that has been painstakingly honed over many years, look no further than the McLaren Speedtail

Words: BETHAN ANDREWS

Just 12.8 seconds. That's all it takes for the Speedtail to reach 300km/h from a standing start. This is the fastest acceleration delivered by any McLaren to date, but it doesn't stop there and the Speedtail is a car that pushes ever further. A car like no other, the McLaren Speedtail is the next chapter in McLaren's Ultimate Series and their first ever 'Hyper-GT'. The pioneering British company is already recognised for producing luxury sportscars and supercars that deliver extraordinary driving experiences, but this is their most aerodynamically efficient car ever. With a pioneering 1050PS hybrid powertrain at its core, it brings together unprecedented levels of innovation and elegance to create a new benchmark in automotive design and offers owners extraordinary opportunity for bespoke personalisation.

Its iconic three seat configuration puts the driver centre-stage – and a jaw-dropping elongated body makes it as much a work of art as a masterpiece of technology. The Speedtail can reach 403 km/h (250mph), yet will also deliver an unprecedented blend of contemporary craftsmanship, materials innovation and bespoke personalisation.

McLaren's design mantra is 'everything for a reason', and this holds true through every last detail of the Speedtail. The design is one of pure, streamlined elegance and is born out of the vision of wanting to create the most aerodynamically efficient car ever, so there is an uninterrupted flow of air from nose to tail. The dramatically elongated tail is as distinct in the automotive world as the Speedtail's incredible velocity. With a host of innovations, the design minimises all unnecessary shutlines and this creates an outline so sleek it seems hewn from a single form.

'McLaren has never built a vehicle like the Speedtail before. As our first 'Hyper G-T', the Speedtail is the ultimate McLaren roadcar; a fusion of art and science that combines an astonishing maximum speed with an iconic central driving position and a truly pioneering approach to bespoke personalisation,' says Mike Flewitt, chief executive officer of McLaren Automotive.

'A groundbreaking hybrid powertrain sits within a lightweight carbon fibre body reminiscent of sleek streamliners that once set world speed records, while the luxurious three-seat cockpit offers a sublime combination of an incredible driving experience, unmatched individualism and innovative materials never seen before in a road-going vehicle.' This is history in the making.

It was important to McLaren to capture a sense of modern design and pure craftsmanship and it has all been achieved using the very latest in digital development technologies. Every element and every aspect has been considered with the mission to maximise top speed at its heart. One of the innovations immediately obvious on the vehicle is

LINED Elegance

the introduction of lightweight, carbon fibre front wheel static aero covers. Door mirrors are also notably absent. Instead, two discreet, high definition digital cameras glide out of the doors when the vehicle ignition is activated.

Just 106 will be created and, perhaps unsurprisingly, all are already reserved, at a price from £1.75million plus taxes. It is precisely this limited production number that has enabled McLaren to push into unchartered territory when it comes to bespoke personalisation. The 106 individuals who have reserved McLaren's next Ultimate Series, the McLaren Speedtail, are being offered the chance to add a unique finishing touch to their 243mph-plus Hyper-GT by selecting from a range of optional finishes for their car's badging. The material finish that McLaren has chosen to exhibit first is a combination of 18 carat white gold and carbon-fibre inlays. The materials used represent just one of the innovative ways Speedtail is combining art with extreme performance.

'As beautiful pieces of exquisitely hand-crafted jewellery, the white-gold badges perfectly set off a car that in every way represents a new gold standard for McLaren luxury,' says Rob Melville, the McLaren Automotive Design Director. 'They fit perfectly with the philosophy of the Speedtail, the most luxurious car in McLaren Automotive's portfolio, as well as paying homage to its forebear, the McLaren F1.'

For more information and news on the Speedtail, visit mclaren.com

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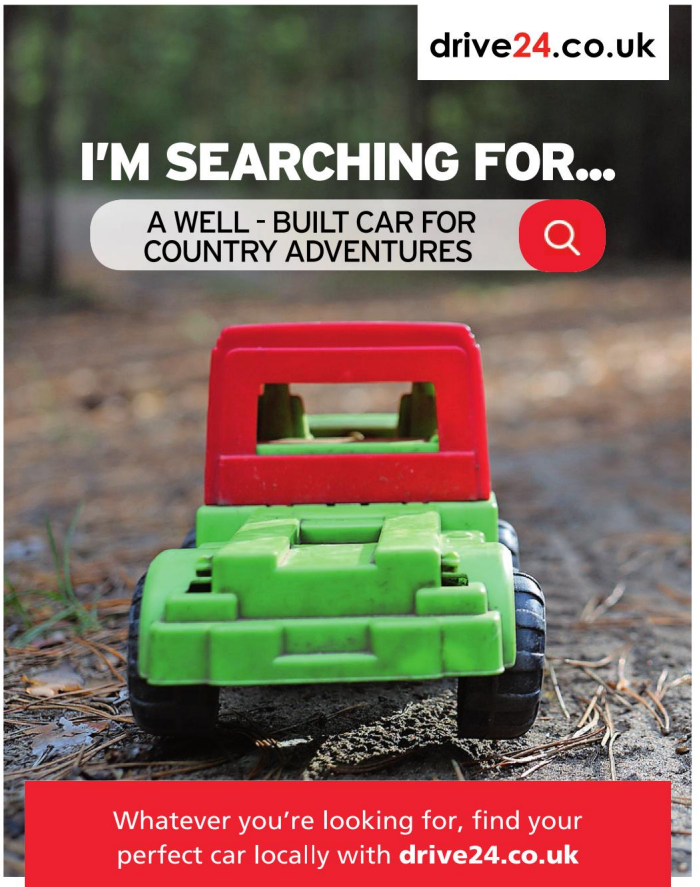

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MAKING A SPLASH

Why The Gainsborough Bath Spa is perfect to wash away all the worries in the world

Words: MARK KEBBLE

What did the Romans ever do for us? Well, for one without them The Gainsborough Bath Spa would never have existed. And they certainly knew how to relax and let off a bit of steam, something I couldn't help thinking about as my shoulders were pummelled by a jet stream of water in the hotel's wonderful bathing area.

Bath has long been my favourite place in the UK to visit. I first visited The Gainsborough Bath Spa a few weeks after its initially opening three years ago. What was refreshing to see were a lot of familiar faces in the staff upon our arrival. Everything about the hotel screams luxury, from the marbled entrance way to the opulent reading room and the five star dining experience in Dan Moon's restaurant. Our room was incredibly comfortable, and the view wonderful – which included the rooftop hot water bath at the Thermae Bath Spa. Kudos to those hardy souls who were out on the Saturday morning when it was bucketing down with rain.

Upon arrival there was only one thing my wife and I wanted to do – relax. While she went to enjoy the many different facets of the baths, from the ice room to sauna, I headed off through underground hallways, up some steps and into the calm oasis of a massage room. At this time of year there are plenty of aches and pains to ease away, so take advantage of a bespoke approach to your treatment.

A quick snooze later and it was time to head to the snug bar for a pre-dinner drink and a look over the menu for the evening. You always know the head chef is one to watch when the restaurant is named after them and Dan Moon deserves this recognition, not to mention the three AA Rosettes that have come his way.

Shockingly, I have – at times – been called uncouth for passing up matching wines for a beer at dinner, but I was determined to prove that reputation to be an unfounded one. It did help that our sommelier was right on the ball with his suggestions to whatever dish we plumped for, and my mood was certainly boosted by the white, red and sweet dessert wine I enjoyed throughout the night. The food throughout was exemplary, but special mention goes to the stupendous Roast Creedy Carver duck.

Waking up a little fuzzy headed – I blame the wine I clearly was not accustomed to – there was nothing else for it than a trip to the baths before breakfast, but our short break was over all too soon. This is my fourth visit to Bath and I never tire of it. Having The Gainsborough to stay at certainly helps, a five star experience worthy of all the praise that comes its way. Romans, I thank you.

thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk

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FEELS LIKE HOME

The Gilpin Hotel and Lake House is a place that will make you feel more than welcome and very special indeed

Words: BETHAN ANDREWS

The Lake District happens to be one of my favourite places in the world, so imagine my delight at being able to visit The Gilpin Hotel and Lake House – a hotel that has, quite rightly, earned its reputation as one of the best properties in the vicinity. I've heard whispers about what makes it so special, but the overarching sense of relaxation, calm and tranquility were, for myself and my boyfriend, the very reason why we did not want to leave.

We stayed in the Lake House part of the hotel offering, set a few miles away from the larger site, The Gilpin, and hidden amidst the forest with views out over the atmospheric private lake. As you enter the gated property, you are met with the immediate feel of entering your own (not so humble) abode. With a no reception desk feel hallway, and instead a cosy, impeccably presented entrance that could have come straight out of the pages of a glossy interiors magazine, our first impressions of the Lake House were positive.

It only has six bedrooms and is therefore the ultimate in romantic escapism. Picture a mid-century modern style building, enveloped by acres of land and beautiful gardens. Then add a wooden hot tub, wooden jetty, boathouse and quaint rowing boats and you've got yourself a perfect idea of this hideaway – it really is as pretty as a picture.

And there is no need to leave once you've arrived (although if you do want to get out and about, Bowness on Windermere is only a short drive down the road), and you can entertain yourself with a jaunt around the lake or a row across. Completely embraced by the comfy arms of the Lake House, we stayed put. What I really liked about the hotel was that everything was on offer to everyone and you don't have to pay extra or book out one of the rowing boats or the hot tub.

On our first evening, after a relaxing read of the papers and abundance of magazines on offer in our bedroom, we were picked up by a chauffeur to go to Gilpin Spice, one of the restaurants at the other site. After a brief meeting with Bambi and an owl en route, we arrived to the most incredible hospitality and service, not to mention the fabulously tasty food. I can honestly say it is one of the best hotel restaurants I've ever eaten at, and it was refreshing to find that it wasn't simply British a la carte. Instead, it is a very trendy restaurant that is inspired by Cumbria having been at the centre of the spice trade. It features an open kitchen serving tapas-style pan-Asian dishes inspired by countries along the spice trail.

On our second day, we were surprised with the Jetty Spa Trail, an experience that I will never forget. We started by creating our own bespoke oils, before enjoying the pool area privately for an hour where we were served fruit juices and platters. Following this, we were treated to a massage, made all the better as we opened our eyes at the end to be greeted by floor to ceiling windows over the lake. Next up, and my personal favourite part, we were taken down to a little boathouse on the lake to have cream tea by the log burner. As if this wasn't special enough, our trail was finished with champagne in the hot tub as the mist rose and the sun then set over the lake.

The little personal touches that are always evident while you are at the Lake House made the stay very special for me. I felt at home, and truly felt that there wasn't anything more they could do. Of course, they had to blow it out of the water one last time, and on our final night we were chauffered across to HRiSHi, the Michelin star restaurant on the sister site. Hrishikesh Desai combines local produce and classic methods to deliver a beautiful feast.

For someone who really struggles to switch off and slow down, the Gilpin Hotel and Lake House encouraged me and allowed me to do exactly that – even on a wet and windy weekend. It felt like a miracle, and it's somewhere I will definitely be returning to again. ■

The Gilpin Lake House is available from £445 per night based on two adults sharing on a B&B basis; thegilpin.co.uk; 015394 88818

THE ATHENS REVIVAL

Greece has had its struggles, but Athens is a city on the cusp of a cultural renaissance

Words: VICTORIA PURCELL

'Everyone's an entrepreneur in Athens. You have to be,' says Greek-born, London-based Elena Torode, who is charged with showing us the contemporary side of a capital city more famous for its ancient history than its hip hangouts.

'Entrepreneurialism is intrinsically part of the Greek DNA,' she goes on to say, as we sit on the rooftop of the new Athens Marriott, sipping cocktails in the afternoon sun. 'Now we have a new age of entrepreneurs born out of the recession with amazing new ideas, but they're also transforming established ideas to keep up with the times.'

My interest is well and truly peaked and, one cocktail down with that heady I-got-up-at-4am-for-my-flight feeling, I'm eager to get out there and see it. And we start where all good holidays should – with a feast.

We head for the district of Metaxourgeio, a boho neighbourhood that has been quietly reinventing itself as the capital's creative quarter. Our destination is Aleria, a 10-minute drive from the Athens Marriott Hotel. And my, do these guys know how to lay on a feast.

The five-course tasting menu includes incredible culinary feats like beef tartar 'moussaka' with aubergine and crispy milk skin; couscous bourdeto with scorpion fish and squid; and pork cheeks with cauliflower, grape syrup and yuzu. The restaurant is set in a renovated neoclassical villa handed down to owner Nikiforos Kechadiadakis by his parents. Despite having no experience in the industry, he decided to turn the property into a restaurant when he was just 23, and now the place is listed among the best restaurants in Europe.

After dinner, and a few too many glasses of fine Greek wine, we pour out into the cool autumnal air and slip through narrow, tree-lined streets where run-down buildings and street

The Acropolis of Athens. Below: The new Athens Marriott Hotel. Bottom: Mikrolimano marina in Piraeus

TRIP NOTES:
Rooms at Athens Marriott Hotel on Syngrou Avenue start from €106 per night. To book see marriott.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: SHANSCHE/GETTY IMAGES PLUS; MILANGONDA/GETTY IMAGES PLUS

art combine to create a unique vibe. We arrive at Beauty Killed the Beast, a very Dalston-esque cocktail bar, where we sip mastiqua and cocktails until around midnight. The day's early alarm call has us all yearning for sleep, but for the locals, the evening was just getting started – and it's only Monday.

There's evidence of the Athens Revival, as us media types have labelled it, in Piraeus – the capital's major port – too. Much like London's docklands, the area's links to shipping and trade have seen it prosper, falter and prosper again. The current trajectory seems to be very much upward, and we spend a morning here sampling traditionally made Greek coffee at Loumidis on Tsamadou street. We're given a demo of how to prepare the world-famous 'black gold' (it's heated over hot sand in a small copper pot called a 'briki'), and we lap it up. Loumidis is one of Greece's top coffee purveyors, and it's a perfect example of how humble traditions are being reinvented for the luxury market. Inside the store there's a plethora of artisan produce born of the coffee bean.

Next door at Miran deli, we sample cured meats, cheese (Greece, apparently, has as many varieties as France, if not more) and tsiporo, which is similar to raki. We also try spoon sweets and Greek yoghurt at a nearby health food store full of honey, nuts and other local delights.

Then we wander off towards the area's two smaller harbours: Zea Marina, with its smattering of luxury yachts, pretty waterside promenade and waterfront restaurants; and Mikrolimano, which is mostly populated by fishing boats and seafront tavernas that provide the perfect setting for a lazy Sunday brunch.

The Athens Marriott Hotel is the ideal base for exploring Piraeus. It's located in Kallithea, a 10-minute drive from the port and 15-minutes from the Acropolis. Right next door to the hotel is the impressive Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre.

Designed by Renzo Piano and completed in 2016, the vast, contemporary glass and concrete sculpture – home of the National Library of Greece and the Greek National Opera – was made possible by a £496 million donation from the charity foundation set up after the death of billionaire Greek shipping tycoon, Stavros Niarchos.

Kallithea translates literally as 'beautiful view', and arriving at the site, Piano asked, 'Where is the beauty? Where is the view?'. The site, an old parking lot left over from the frenzied stadium building ahead of the 2004 Athens Olympics, is blocked from the sea by a spaghetti junction of messy roads. And so the architect set about restoring the beauty, and the view, by creating a lush, sloped parkland that reaches up to the centre's viewing platforms. It's a beautiful place for a stroll, some light watersports on the man-made lake or an alfresco coffee with a dramatic panorama of the city and the sea.

The Athens Marriott Hotel, launched in October 2018, marks the brand's re-entry into the Greek market after a five year absence – another sign that the capital's resurgence as a destination is gathering pace.

The hotel has 366 rooms and suites with contemporary interiors, chic bathrooms and, in my case, a generous terrace granting views of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre and the coastline.

There's also a small-but-perfectly-formed rooftop pool and two restaurants: Made in Athens restaurant, inspired by Athenian marketplaces; and e&o Athens, up on the rooftop, which serves contemporary pan-Asian cuisine.

Think Athens and you think of the Acropolis – especially if you've just been watching *The Little Drummer Girl* on BBC One – or you might think of the Athens Riviera (glorious by British standards but 'kinda meh' by Greek standards, I'm told). Or perhaps you've headed straight for the port to hop on a Santorini-bound ferry? Well, let the city of Athens pass you by no more; there's a revival to explore. ■

SUSTAINABLY SPECIAL

The brand new Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort will blow you away with its eco-friendly initiatives, personal touches and location within the Baa Atoll

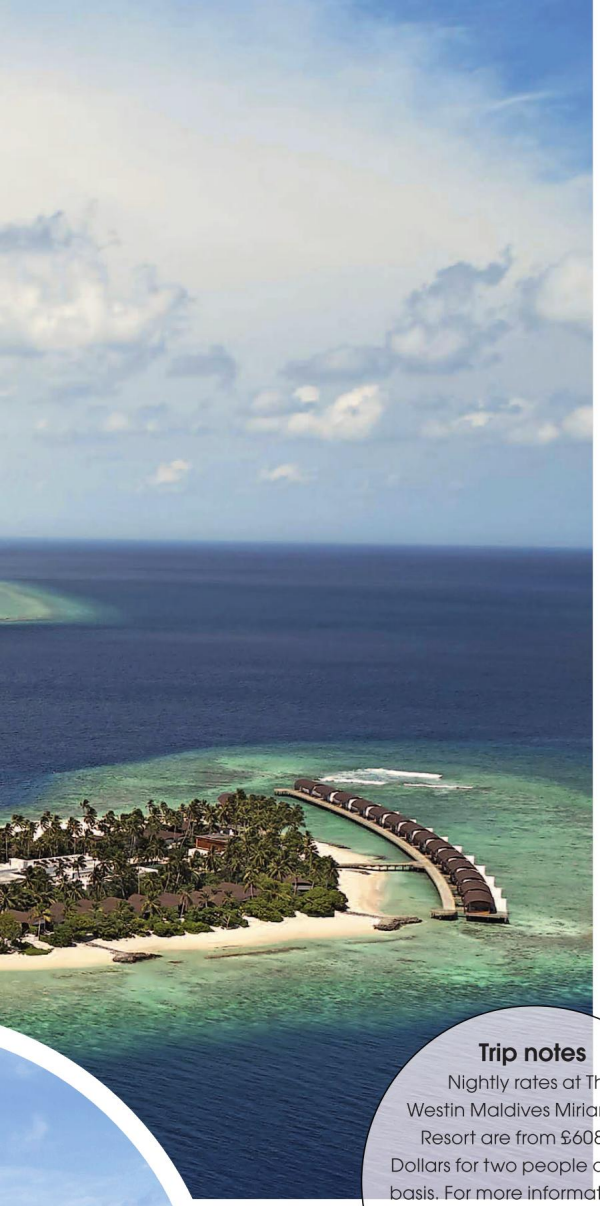
Words: BETHAN ANDREWS

As I swooped down onto a paradise island from the sea plane that had transported me from Male airport, I couldn't help but pinch myself and feel like the luckiest woman alive to be able to witness from above the sheer beauty of the Maldives. Watching the calming patterns of the ocean and the islands as they erupt out of the water creates a feeling inside that I just can't explain – a window seat you must have!

It's fair to say that the Maldives in general is a pretty special place, and many of the resorts situated within this beautiful part of the world are stunning – largely to do with their lucky locations. But I can hand on heart say that the new Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort, presented with a focus on wellness and sustainability, is one of the most wonderful places I've had the pleasure of stepping foot on. And it is not only due to its second to none location, but because the island is a master in welcoming you, accommodating and spoiling you, teaching you about the world in which it sits and, most importantly, protecting the world around it. In my eyes, the Westin Maldives is not trying to be different or add something extra such as slides and underwater bedrooms, but it still *is* different. The resort has managed to set itself apart from the rest by simply being.

The Westin Maldives is nestled on a beautiful coral island in the Baa Atoll, a designated UNESCO Biosphere Reserve site and a location only 18km from landmarks such as the Hanifaru Bay, which is known for the largest gathering of manta rays globally. But don't worry about timing your trip to suit the above manta ray explosion, as the saying 'there are plenty more fish in the sea' couldn't ring more true here. The snorkelling excursions that can be arranged through the resort are a wonderful way of exploring the oceans of this incredible slice of planet earth.

I was lucky enough to experience this straight from my overwater villa as well. Merely a hop, skip and a jump from my heavenly bed (more on that later!), and I'm entering the crystal clear waters from my private terrace. Although sadly much of the coral



has been bleached as a result of the warming oceans, there is still so much to see. From stingrays to colourful fish (you can ask the dive centre for a fish encyclopedia so that you know exactly what you are looking at), to turtles as well, it really is the most incredible underwater world. Miriandhoo is, in fact, a turtle sanctuary, so you can easily and often see turtles nesting along the white beaches. Reef sharks, lionfish, manta rays and whale sharks all reside in the Baa Atoll as well.

And if you are lucky, you'll see the resident dolphins go parading past. They happened to love the channel outside of my villa, so I was treated to 20 dolphins somersaulting and flipping for me a few mornings a week and, let me tell you, it is one of the most beautiful, humbling events to watch. However, one of the best ways to see these wonderful creatures is to book onto a dolphin cruise and, hopefully, they'll arrive and dance along in the wake of the boat for you.

But back to the heavenly bed – sleep is something that certainly comes naturally here. The Westin brand were the first hotel brand to create a signature mattress and the bed is uniquely designed with plush, pillow-top construction for premium comfort and support.

In total, the resort features 70 stunning villas and suites, 41 on island and 29 overwater. Each villa is shaped with an eco-friendly double roofing to create the perfect natural ventilation. Poised over the sea on stilts and with an area of almost 200 square metres each, the overwater suites are among the largest a resort has to offer in the Baa Atoll region. Plus, they come complete with touches such as orange presses in the rooms, so that you can make yourself a fresh orange juice every morning while taking in the blue views ahead of you.

When it comes to interior design in general, the Westin Maldives has got it completely right. Design led, the resort blends uniquely but seamlessly with the environment around it and mirrors the incredible nature outside its perimeter. Led by award-winning Milan-based architects PEIA Associati, the design takes inspiration from the ocean with a visionary approach towards environmental sustainability. Many of the features, including a breathtakingly beautiful feature staircase out of the main dining area, evoke ideas of the natural environment – in this case, making you think of a shell.

All elements of the resort's design uses natural materials as its stimulus, such as the movement and flow of marine life including sea turtles and whale sharks, providing guests with a link to the region's exceptional enchantment. An aerial view of The Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort reveals an outline in the shape of a fish, a distinctive reflection of the beauty of surrounding marine life; while the arrival jetty is structured to resemble clamshells and the oceans' waves. I felt a lot of the design was very refreshing, having steered away from the white-washed, minimal interiors that many resorts have succumbed to recently.

While on the topic of refreshing, the food on this island is some of the best I've had the pleasure of tasting. I often feel that resorts play it safe when it comes to their dining, and although often still incredibly tasty, that they attempt to simply cater for all as opposed to creating a one-off, entirely special dining experience. Executive chef Jason Millar (who has worked with Raymond Blanc and Jason Atherton) has managed to really push the boat out here, and each separate food offering is second to none. I love that there is a big emphasis on celebrating the talents and the cuisine of the locals, and the staff are knowledgeable, talented and incredibly passionate. You can choose between the Hawker restaurant for an authentic, sand on the feet street food experience, Island Kitchen for a well thought out feast, or the jewel in the crown, Pearl, the Japanese fine dining restaurant. You can honestly ask for anything, and they didn't struggle to cater for the various dietary requirements within our group – from no egg to no gluten, to simply a preference for oat milk with one's coffee.

Another place on the island whereby you can ask for all of your troubles to be washed away is in the Heavenly Spa. Again, I loved that the environment took centre stage, as I was asked to choose out of a box my favourite shell to accompany my massage. I went for the shell that symbolised hope, and I was asked to focus on that as my stresses were all taken away from me. As I was treated to a private dining experience on the beach on the final night, with waves lapping around me, I smiled at the fact that this incredibly luxurious escape was one that has its environment in its heart at all times – something often rare to come across in this market.

It's sustainable and it is special, and something tells me it will be a firm fixture on the travel lists of many for many, many years to come. And my new answer for where my favourite place in the world is? Definitely, right in the middle of the Baa Atoll. ■

Trip notes

Nightly rates at The Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort are from £608/800 Dollars for two people on a B&B basis. For more information or to book visit marriott.com/hotels/travel/mlewi-the-westin-maldives-miriandhoo-resort

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FREEDOM *TO* LEARN

A TALKING TRADITION

This month will see National Storytelling Week take place, an event that aims to show this age-old tradition is as relevant now as ever

Words: ELLIE FELLS

For many of us, the words 'once upon a time' will take us back to our infant school days. However, the ancient art of story-telling is by no means something that should be rooted in childhood, and sharing tales with one another can have hugely positive impacts on both the young and old.

The Society for Storytelling works to keep this tradition alive. Founded as a charity in 1993, the Society now consists of 220 professional story tellers. 'The idea was that the Society would help to promote storytelling across the country,' their chair, Paul Jackson, explains. Their flagship event is an annual National Storytelling Week, which this year is taking place between 26 January and 2 February; the week will see organisations from across the country come together to practice this art form, with hundreds of events taking place everywhere from community centres through to Westminster Abbey.

Schools across the country are being encouraged to take part in the week, with the hope that the sharing of stories will be beneficial to both a child's learning, and to their mental health. 'Whenever I go into schools and tell children a story, I ask how it makes them feel. They always say something like, "It's relaxing",' Jackson reflects. Telling stories to each other is a way of getting children to take a step away from their computer screens and mobile phones, encouraging communication and the use of their imagination. 'We want children to create their own stories,' Jackson adds, with the Society urging teachers to give their students the freedom to tell whatever narratives they like.

However, National Storytelling Week certainly isn't restricted to the younger generation. 'Story tellers will go out into small community groups, nursing homes, sheltered housing, to people who don't have housing at all,' Jackson says. Coming together to share stories is a great way of reducing loneliness, creating a feeling of belonging. 'It's not just the phrase "everyone has a story to tell", but rather that every story is important to that particular person,' Jackson explains. He adds that it is especially beneficial for those suffering from dementia, with the hope that telling stories will help in linking together fond, fragmented memories. 'During the time in that story people can be taken out of their troubles,' he says. Anyone can get involved with National Storytelling Week, and information packs for holding your own event are available to download on the Society's website. There's no time like the present.

Find out more at sfs.org.uk, and if you are interested in organising an event, email membership@sfs.org.uk

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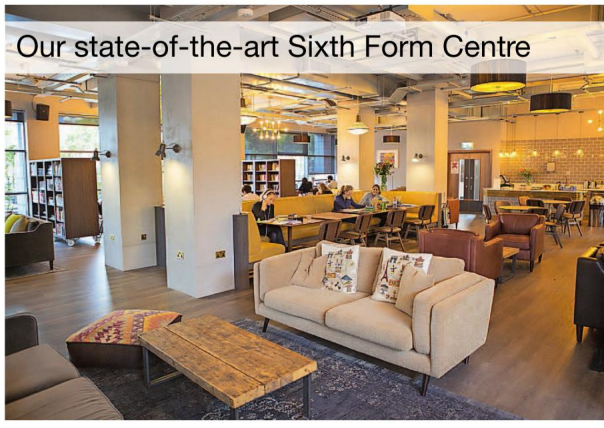

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AN ALTERNATIVE VISION

Achievement and happiness can go hand in hand says All Hallows Head, Dr Trevor Richards

I was startled to read a report recently which asserted that there is an 'achievement/happiness trade-off' in education with some traditional teaching methods boosting pupil achievement, but making children unhappy. As an educationalist and a child psychologist, I truly believe that happiness and achievement can and should go hand in hand. Ensuring our children's well-being provides the best atmosphere for them to learn and grow and indeed to lay down firm foundations for thriving in future life.

In that report for the Think Tank for the Centre for Education Economics, Gabriel Heller-Sahlgren maintains that approaches such as teacher-led teaching, competition for school entry, an emphasis on academic knowledge and a highly competitive learning environment can all boost pupils' test scores but do 'make learning less joyful'. He goes on to claim that policymakers and stakeholders need to undertake a cost/benefit analysis to prioritise whether pupil achievement in assessments should take precedence, due to its hypothetical correlation with economic performance, or pupil happiness, as this is linked to adult life satisfaction.

I had hoped that the education debate had moved past such blunt analysis and binary thinking. What about the outcomes of education that are not easily measured, but are increasingly highly prized by employers, such as innovative thinking, creativity, problem-solving, flexibility, positive mind-sets, strong values and collaborative skills? What about the notion that if children are really flourishing and engrossed in their learning, they will perform at their very best, be challenged and fulfilled and happy? I certainly believe we can ensure effective learning at All Hallows – in every area of child development – and nurture our children's well-being.

Our creative approach to education is very much part of this process. The element of risk-taking which comes with originality not only helps our young people learn as they make mistakes along the way but, by teaching them to embrace those mistakes, it can foster resilience and a mentally healthy mindset. Parents and teachers can fall into the trap of thinking creativity is linked solely to artistic skills, but it's not. Neither is it about demoting the importance of academic disciplines. Creativity is also about being able to look at a problem, research ideas, and develop solutions as an individual or as a group through collaboration.

Perhaps there are areas of this country and within education internationally where parents and schools are happy to trade-off happiness in favour of achievement, but I never want that to be the case at All Hallows. Indeed, the amazing outcomes achieved by our pupils can be attributed to the very fact that ensuring their well-being lies at the heart of everything we do. Year on year, our pupils have had outstanding success on entry to a wide range of top senior schools both in the South West and across the UK. The astounding array of scholarships and awards they have gained, in all areas of school life including academic, sport, creative design, art, music and all-round, has prompted our Governors to celebrate the school's creativity with the introduction of an exciting new Creative Scholarship with free weekly boarding. A decision which has perhaps been rightly justified by the school's subsequent shortlisting for the TES Independent Schools 2019 Creativity Award. ■

For more information about All Hallows and the Creative Scholarship, please contact Jackie on 01749 881609 or via email at admissions@allhallowsschool.co.uk

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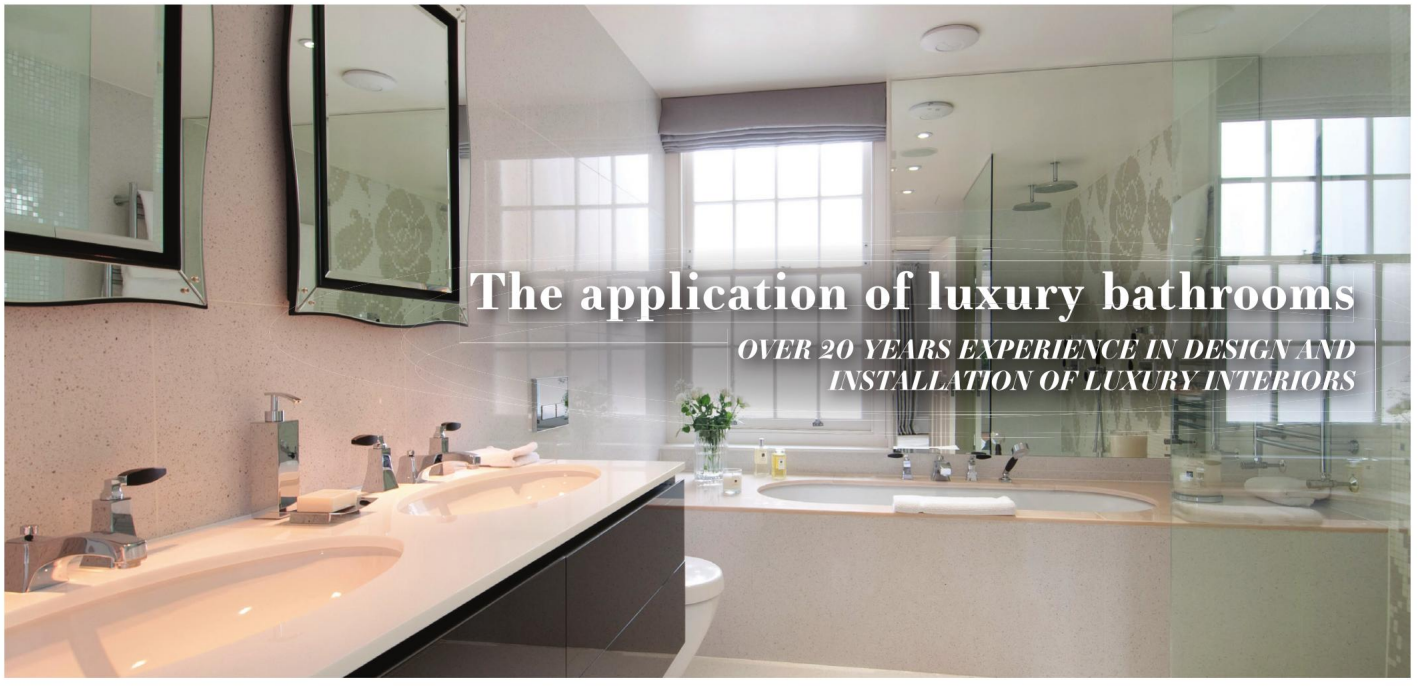

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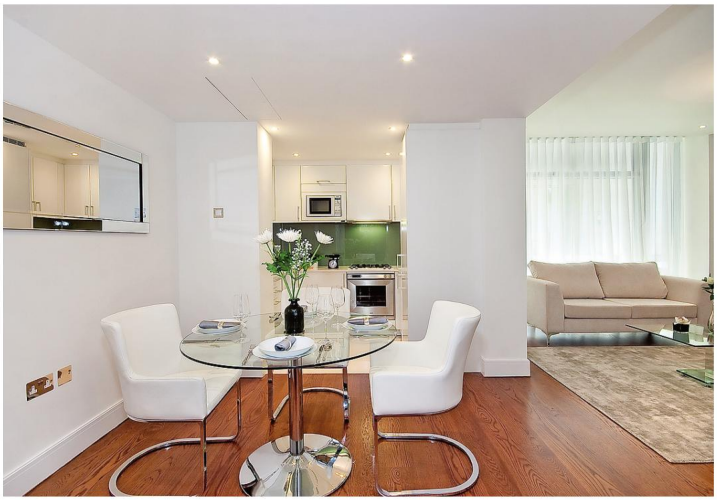

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Bishops Row, 147 Stevenage Road, Fulham SW6; struttandparker.com

NEW YEAR, NEW MOVE

London has much to offer buyers in 2019

Words: FIONA BRANDHORST

Privacy, access to local shops and amenities, digital connectivity and public transport will be among the top reasons for moving this year, according to Strutt & Parker's latest Housing Futures research. Even in the digital age, more people wanted to be close to family and friends, up from 37 per cent to 48 per cent since 2013, says the report. Big cities like London have become more popular as a preferred location to live. Walking to work was also seen as an increasingly attractive option, up from 25 per cent to 36 per cent. 'City dwellers don't have long commutes to work and can enjoy walking to a local café or the gym,' adds Vanessa Hale, Director of Research at Strutt & Parker. 'In today's hectic times, this is the lifestyle many people want.'

Orlando Rodriguez, Design Director at luxury London developer Northacre, predicts that with fewer people owning cars in the capital, car parking spaces will become redundant. 'I see a business opportunity focused on using these subterranean spaces,' he suggests. 'The obsession with gadgets in the home is also waning. Older buyers need to ask their children for help to use iPads to control heating and lighting. We need to keep it simple.'

This year, you'll be hearing the word 'newstalgia' to describe new residential schemes keeping a foot in their past. Pinks Mews by luxury boutique developer Sons & Co is a fine example. The secluded gated development, comprising 35 luxurious apartments set in the heart of Holborn, is accessed through a private walkway and retains the exterior walls of the Victorian alms houses which once stood on the site. A vibrant mix of old and new featuring state-of-the-art interior design and modern technology, Pinks Mews is opposite the attractive 19th century Gothic-style Prudential Assurance Building. Prices start from £995,000 for a first floor

Pictured clockwise from top left: One Park Drive exterior and a Loft Apartment; Floral Court; Richmond Chase; Pinks Mews, inside and out

one-bedroom apartment on the market with CBRE.

The Floral Court Collection by Capco in Covent Garden also marries modern architecture with the conservation and restoration of heritage buildings and is moments from top designer stores and eateries. The grand entrance hall and concierge lobby, located in the former boardroom of the 18th century Westminster Fire Office, charms visitors instantly. The 31 boutique studio, one, two and three bedroom apartments including one penthouse are set around a new courtyard and many feature a terrace or balcony, oases in this central part of town. Prices start from £1.3m.

Drawing on the period architecture of nearby Richmond Village, the Georgian and Victorian-style new homes at Richmond Chase are bang up to the 21st century inside and equally at home with the manicured landscaping and paved avenues outside. Three, four and five-bedroom houses by Berkeley Homes start from £1.48m.

The Help to Buy equity loan scheme has been pivotal for sales in London, so the recent government announcement that it will be extended for first time buyers from 2021 until 2023 has been welcomed. Knight Frank has just launched three new east London schemes offering the government incentive at Bow Common Lane near Mile End Park, Douro next to Olympic Park and Upton Gardens, the former home of West Ham United FC. Andrew Groocock, Knight Frank Canary Wharf, comments: 'The pace and pipeline of development in the area has accelerated in the last decade making these areas very different places to what they were 30 years ago.'

In south west London, Teddington Riverside is a new luxury waterfront development located on the site of the iconic Teddington Film Studios, overlooking Teddington Lock. Most of the apartments have balconies or terraces and many enjoy outstanding views of the River Thames. Trains from nearby Teddington Station reach Waterloo in 36 minutes. Knight Frank is selling a one-bedroom apartment for £770,000.

One Park Drive is architect Herzog & de Meuron's first UK residential project at Wood Wharf, the newest district on Canary Wharf's private estate. Positioned at the head of the dock on 23 acres of reclaimed land, the striking 58 storey circular tower offers 438 apartments in three distinct living zones: the Loft, Cluster and Bay apartments. Each has stunning views, a private balcony, designed to not be overlooked by its neighbour, and dedicated residents' amenities including a health club, cinema and library arranged across the first floor. Prices start from £825,000.

One thing's for certain, there won't be many dull moments in the London property market this year. ■

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Crofton Park office: 020 7781 9888

Royston Court, SE24
£1,565 pcm

A two double bedroom purpose built mid-century block on Burbage Road - a much sought after tree-lined road. The property is within close proximity to the centre of Herne Hill with its selection of restaurant and shopping facilities and the delights of Brockwell Park.

Herne Hill office: 020 8702 9555

Waldegrave Road, SE19
£2,600 pcm

A characterful three bedroom period conversion positioned on a prime road in central Crystal Palace. Quite unlike anything else in the area, this exceptional property could make for an ideal long-term tenancy. EPC: E

Crystal Palace office: 020 8702 9333

Woods Road, SE15
£1,650 pcm

Pedder are pleased to introduce a unique two bedroom apartment to let located in a new development on Woods Road. This flat has recently been completed and is extremely well placed for the amenities, entertainment and connections of Peckham. EPC: B

East Dulwich Village office: 020 8702 8222

Turney Road, SE21
£1,850 pcm

A delightful two bedroom cottage situated in the heart of Dulwich Village. Located at the eastern end of Turney Road, the boutique shops in Dulwich Village could not be more amenable and the open space of Dulwich Park is just a short stroll away. EPC: E

Dulwich Village office: 020 8702 8111

Kemble Road, SE23
£1,250 pcm

An extremely spacious one bedroom flat close to the centre of Forest Hill to let. The flat comprises a spacious lounge, double bedroom with fitted storage, beautifully presented dining area which leads onto the kitchen and a large private garden to the rear. EPC: E

Forest Hill office: 020 8702 9444

Tredown Road, SE26
£2,500 pcm

An impressive three storey period family home available to rent. This property benefits from the perfect space to house a growing family and is situated on a residential and sought after street in Sydenham. EPC: D

Sydenham office: 020 8702 9777

Clive Road, SE21
£1,600 pcm

An attractive and characterful two double bedroom apartment to rent on this popular West Dulwich Road. Being on the first floor, the apartment is naturally bright with well proportioned rooms throughout including an eat-in kitchen. EPC: E

Dulwich Village office: 020 8702 8111

Durban Road, SE27
£1,250 pcm

A spacious two bedroom flat To Let in West Norwood. The property occupies the ground floor of an period building with a private garden EPC: C

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Lawrie Park Crescent, SE26
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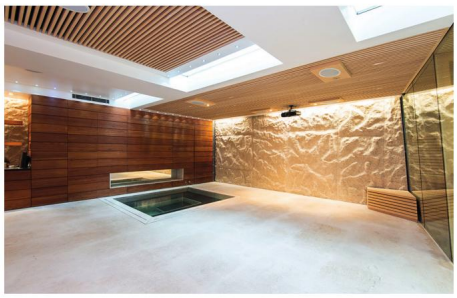

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